

DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL

AMBIENT SOUND MONITORING NETWORK

Annual Report 2016



Dublin City Ambient Sound Monitoring Website
WWW.DublinCityNoise.com

Produced by
Traffic Noise & Air Quality Unit,
Environment and Transportation Department,
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Comhairle Cathrach
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council

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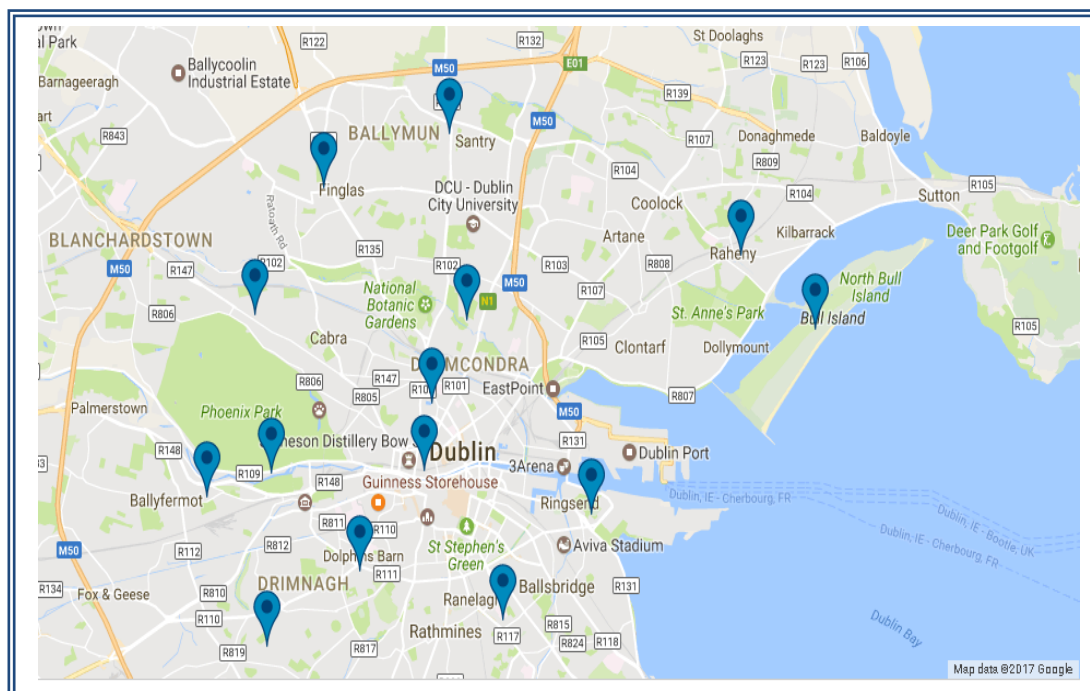
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This is the eighth Annual Report for the Dublin City Ambient Sound Monitoring Network. Dublin City Council commenced the installation of a permanent ambient sound monitoring network in 2009. Currently the monitoring network comprises of 14 sites. The purpose of the network is to measure outdoor ambient sound levels in the City, at sites which are representative of typical sound levels to which citizens are being exposed. It does not measure ‘Noise Levels’ – See ‘*What is Noise?*’



The network currently consists of 14 monitoring locations. These are:-

- Ashtown, off Navan Rd. D7, Private House.
- Ballyfermot Road, D10, Civic Centre.
- Ballymun Road, D11, Library.
- Bull Island, D3, Interpretative Centre
- Chapelizod Road, D8, Dublin City Council Rowing Club.
- Howth Road, D5, Raheny Library.
- Blessington St, D1, Blessington Basin
- Millmount Avenue, D9, Library.
- Percy French Road, D12, Walkinstown Library.
- Ringsend, D4, Irishtown Stadium.
- Woodstock Gardens, Ranelagh, D6.
- Chancery Park, Dublin 1, Public Park.
- Dolphin's Barn, Crumlin Rd, Dublin 8.
- Mellows Park, Finglas, Dublin 11.

What is Noise?

There is a subtle difference, which can lead to a misunderstanding, in relation to noise and the actual sound we hear. Noise is often defined as unwanted sound. As such, it is a subjective response or value judgement in relation to a sound stimulus. This 'judgement' can be influenced by the sound level of the acoustic stimulus, the time of its occurrence, its time domain, its frequency spectrum and its informational content. An authoritative report published in the UK in 1963 – known as the Wilson report, defined noise as “sound which is undesired by the recipient”. The Report also noted that it is well known that the actual loudness of a noise is not by itself a measure of whether it will give rise to annoyance or complaint.

What turns a 'physical sound measurement' into a 'subjective noise level' causing annoyance is dependent on the context within which the observer hears the sound/noise. As such, quoting sound levels without putting them into context is somewhat meaningless. This report provides a site location map for each site in order to enable the reader to put the site and its measurements into the context of its physical surroundings i.e. – is it close to a main road, is it in the City or suburbs, is it a Quiet Area? It also defines the time periods over which the measurements are taken.

Dublin City Council Sound Monitoring Website

A specific website dedicated to displaying near real-time ambient sound monitoring is available to the public. One can now see current sound levels at a glance, but can also obtain further historical data by clicking on the provided links and 'drilling down' further into the data. Links are also provided to information on what the various measurement parameters mean and Information on acoustics in general. The near real time monitoring data can be found at our website link:

<http://www.dublincitynoise.com>. General information on noise, acoustics and associated links can also be found there.

Monitoring Network

The monitoring network measures continuously, 5 minute parcels of sound right throughout the year. These periods of 5 minute sound levels are then converted and presented as average hourly sound levels in decibels (dB (A)). This enables the compilation of *day, evening, night, and Lden* statistics. The averaging of measured data has been carried out logarithmically rather than normal arithmetical averaging. This is in line with the International Standards Organisation 'Recommendation 1996' in relation to long term measurements. The use of this method tends to assign a greater influence on the overall average by higher sound levels for the period being measured. For example, an arithmetical average of four sound levels such as 50dB, 50dB, 50dB and 70dB will result in a 55dB average. Averaged logarithmically these values produced a result of 64.1dB. Therefore it is critical that our sound monitors are so located that no one sound source dominates the sound measurements that could unduly skew the average ambient measurements.

Guidelines\ Standards for exposure to Ambient Sound levels

Sound emission criteria for certain sources, outside of the work environment, can be applied and enforced through Integrated Pollution Prevention Control licences, Planning Control, or Section 107-108 of the Environmental Protection Agency Act 1992. There are no legally binding statutory limits for ambient sound levels, similar to those that currently exist for air quality.

Measurement Parameters

The European Commission requires the use of a parameter called the Lden (Sound **L**evel for **D**ay, **E**vening and **N**ight) for population exposure assessment. This measurement parameter of *Day-evening-night level* is a descriptor of average daily sound levels throughout a full year, with the addition of a penalty of 5 dB (A) for evening sound (i.e. 19.00-23.00) and a penalty of 10 dB (A) for night time sound (23.00-7.00). Lden has been put forward as a single value parameter for the quantification of annoyance caused by noise. Its one drawback is that it is based on annual average calculations. Therefore, one has to have annualised data before one can use it in any assessments. Our monitoring network fulfils this criteria. Therefore, our assessments of Dublin's environmental acoustic quality is not solely dependent on mathematical computer modelling. However the Lden parameter is not a suitable parameter for the assessment of local noise complaints. Average values, or maximum\ minimum values over specific periods of time would be more suited for this use.

Areas with desirable\undesirable or low\high sound levels

The Dublin City Council Noise Action Plan December 2013 – November 2018 proposes that areas with undesirable high sound levels are areas with a night time sound level greater than 55 decibels and a daytime level greater than 70 decibels. It also proposes that areas with desirably low sound levels are defined as areas with a night time level less than 50 decibels and\or a daytime level less than 55 decibels.

The World Health Organisation Night Noise Guidelines (NNG) for Europe

These guidelines propose a **N**ight **N**oise **G**uideline (NNG) ultimate target of 40dB Lnight outside. An interim target (IT) of 55 dB Lnight, outside is recommended '*in the situations where the achievement of the NNG is not feasible in the short run for various reasons*' - WHO.

Data Loss

Loss of data is mainly due to the drifting of the calibration of the microphones or power failure at a site. Data which could not be verified with monitor calibration was discarded. There was no instance of vandalism at any of the sites.

Sound Sources

Since commissioning our network in 2009, the measurements indicate that under normal conditions the dominant sound source in Dublin is traffic. This sound comes from two aspects of traffic – the road surface i.e. wheel\tyre interface where sound levels increase with speed and secondly, engine\ gear change and body rattle sound, normally observed at lower speeds. The average daily summary charts (pages 16 - 23) display double peaks, one between 7-9 a.m. and one between 5-7p.m. These characteristics are similarly to traffic flow patterns on major roads. The charts that do not reflect these characteristics represent areas that are influenced by more natural sounds – sites such as Bull Island.

Weather also has a major influence on sound measurements. 2016 was calmer than the previous year, 2015. In order to take into account the impact windy and wet weather can have on sound measurements the annual hourly median was compared across all individual sites and across the network as a whole. The median value is defined as the middle number in a sorted list of numbers. It is used for comparison purposes as it is not affected by outliers – i.e. abnormally high sound levels caused by high winds and rain. As can be seen in *Table 1* the median has remained remarkably stable over the years compare to the average day, evening and night time levels (Fig.2), which can vary from year to year due to differing weather conditions.

Median of Annual Hourly Sound Levels
Table 1

| Sites | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 |
|-------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Ballymun | 62 | 63 | 63 | 63 | 63 |
| DCC Rowing Club | 54 | 55 | 55 | 55 | 54 |
| Navan Rd | 54 | 54 | 54 | 55 | 54 |
| Ballyfermot | 56 | 56 | 56 | 56 | 56 |
| Drumcondra | 53 | 55 | 55 | 55 | 54 |
| Raheny | 55 | 56 | 53 | 54 | 55 |
| Ringsend | 49 | 51 | 50 | 50 | 50 |
| Bull Island | 48 | 50 | 50 | 49 | 50 |
| Walkinstown | 51 | 53 | 53 | 53 | 52 |
| Woodstock Gdns | 46 | 47 | 47 | 47 | 46 |
| ChanceryPk | 59 | 61 | 61 | 61 | 60 |
| Blessington Basin | 50 | 51 | 51 | 51 | 51 |
| Dolphins Barn | 0 | 0 | 57 | 57 | 57 |
| Mellowes Park | 0 | 0 | 57 | 57 | 57 |
| Network | 53 | 54 | 55 | 55 | 54 |

These weather episodes are picked up as high sound levels in the hourly and monthly summary charts, (pages 25 -109). The measurements for Bull Island and Blessington Basin, which are designated as 'Quiet Area' displayed relatively high sound levels during these weather episodes. It is therefore important to note comments already made in relation to differences between noise levels and sound levels.

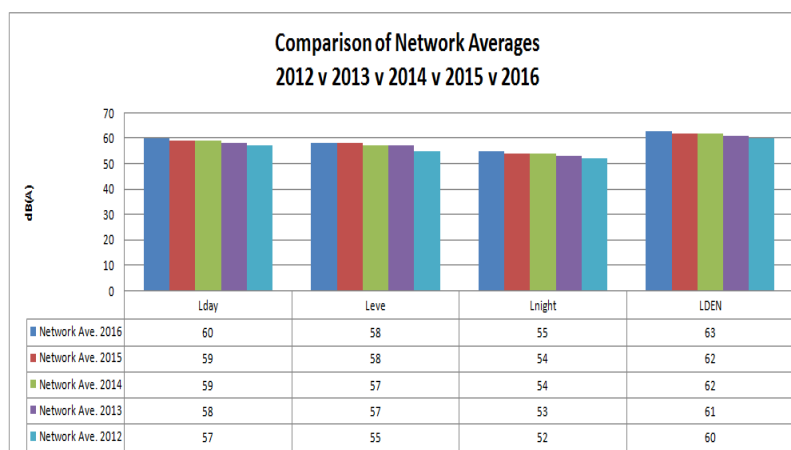
The monitoring site locations are displayed on maps to the rear of this report and provide an indication as to the type of areas in which they are situated. Ringsend, Bull Island and Blessington Basin, tend to display more erratic sound levels. This could possibly be due to the lesser influence of

traffic sound sources in these areas which allows for weather to be more of a dominant influence. Both Bull Island and Blessington Basin sites are designated 'Quiet Areas' and monitoring at these locations will continue into the foreseeable future in order to assess any deterioration in ambient sound levels.

Summary of Results

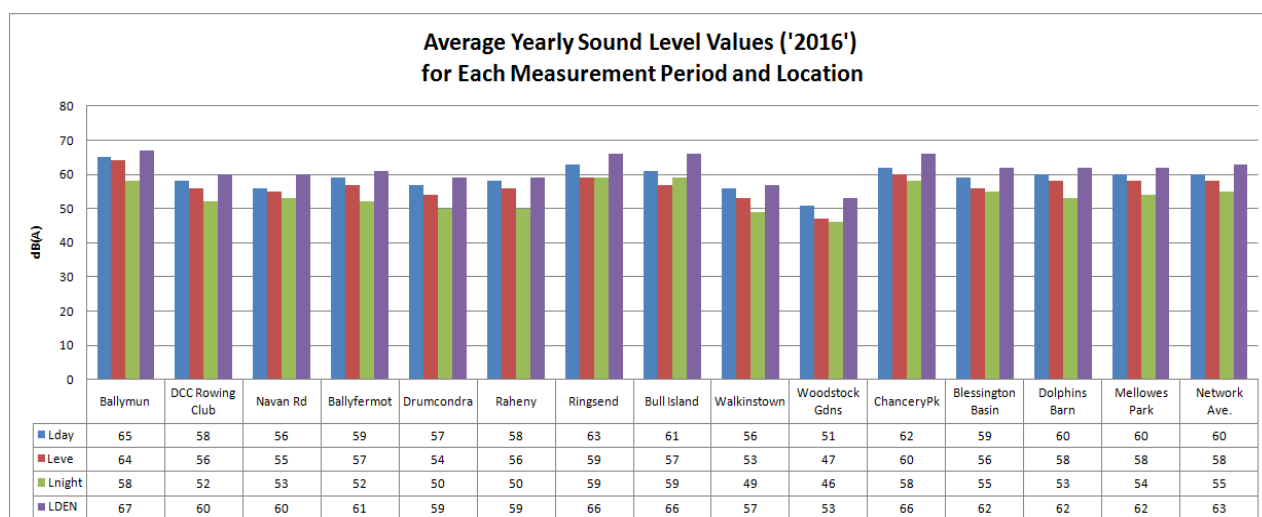
Set out in *fig.2* is a comparison of the Network averages from 2012 to 2016. There was an increase of one decibel in day time, night time and LDEN levels for 2016. *Fig. 3* provides more detail on individual site measurements. The measurements for the

Fig. 2



year 2016 indicate that four locations – Ballymun, Ringsend, Chancery Pk. and Bull Island exceeded the undesirable values of 55dB night, with night time values of 58dB(A), 59dB(A), 58dB(A) and 59dB(A) respectively. This also meant that the WHO NNGL interim target for exterior night time level of 55dB(A) was also exceeded at these sites, although the network average did not exceed this level. Two sites – Woodstock Gardens in Ranelagh and Walkinstown, met the desirable criteria for night time levels. This is an improvement for Walkinstown. All sites were below the undesirable daytime levels of 70dB(A). Along with Bull Island weather seemed to have a greater impact on the traditionally quieter areas measurement's such as Raheny, Ranelagh, Ringsend, and Blessington Basin, and to a lesser extent Walkinstown. See charts on pages 16 - 23.

Fig.3



Measurement Results

As mentioned previously, the monitoring network is not a 'noise monitoring' network. The network measures and monitors actual sound - from all sources. No assessment is made as to whether it is unwanted or not. Only when a comparison is made, for instance in this report, with some valid criteria, can a judgement be made as to whether the sound levels are desirable or not. Bull Island is a case in point. It has produced some of the highest measured sound levels of all the monitoring locations. This is due to high winds and rolling waves. Therefore it has to be borne in mind that the ambient sound monitoring network measures all sound from all sources thus giving an indication of the amount of sound - not noise, the general population is exposed to from the hustle and bustle of daily life.

The continuous measurements from all sites over the past eight years have consolidated the view that traffic is the dominant sound source within Dublin. Hourly sound values 'shadow' traffic volumes as they vary throughout the day. This can be seen in the daily summary charts (pages 16 - 23).

Comparison of the Network Lden values with last year shows a one decibel increase in 2016 values over 2015. On an individual site by site comparison, the Lden for Ballymun, Ballyfermot, Drumcondra, Raheny, Chancery Park, and Mellowes Park were identical to last year, (2015). The Lden for all the other sites were lower, except for Ringsend and Blessington Basin.

Sound Level Variations

The average difference between day time and night time levels across the network is 5dB (A) – a consistent difference since 2010. Recent research carried out by the University of Hartford, USA on Dublin City's measurement data, over a three year period, has found that the overall average seasonal difference in average sound levels was measured to be 3.3dB(A). It found Summer and Spring months are on average 2- 3dB(A) 'quieter' than Winter months.

The average daily summaries '*Average LAeq*' (sound levels) provide a more detailed view of how sound levels vary from hour to hour throughout the average day and between the different days of the week. During the average weekday sound levels (along with traffic levels) start rising at 6 a.m. After approximately 9 a.m. sound levels at most sites level off until 9pm when they start to fall. It is interesting to note the more 'erratic' sound levels at Raheny, Ranelagh, Bull Island, Ringsend and Blessington Basin, where weather seemed to have a greater impact on the traditionally quieter areas measurement's - see charts on pages 16 -23.

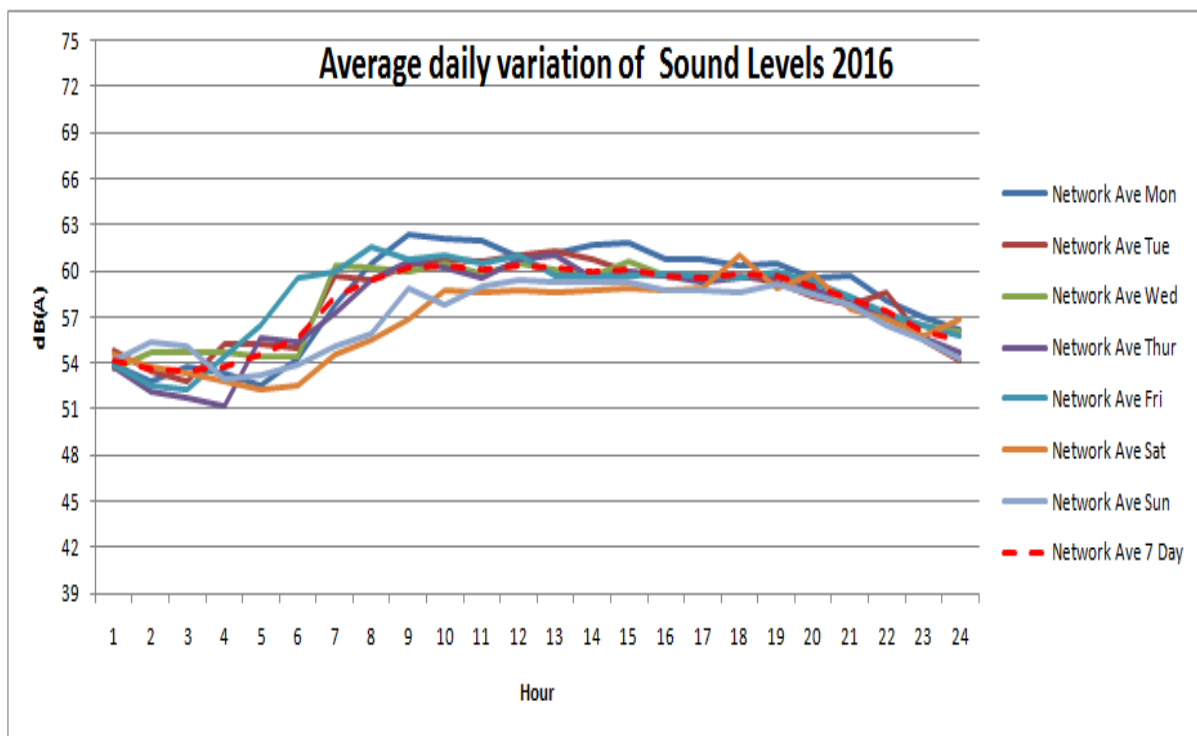
The site with the lowest daytime sound values was Woodstock Gardens followed by Navan Road and Walkinstown, both tying for second spot. The three sites with the highest daytime sound values were Ballymun, Ringsend and Chancery Park – the same as the previous three years except for Ringsend which is a new entrant at this level. The site with the lowest night time sound value was Woodstock Gardens followed by Walkinstown with Drumcondra and Raheny tying for third spot. The sites with the

highest night time sound values were, Ringsend and Bull Island tying for first place followed by Ballymun and Chancery Park tying for second place.

The 'Monthly Charts' presented to the rear of this report provide a detailed view of how average daily sound levels change from day to day and month to month. In 2016 the Network's highest average monthly sound levels occurred in January, followed by February and March similar to last year. The Network's average monthly lowest levels were experienced from April to September

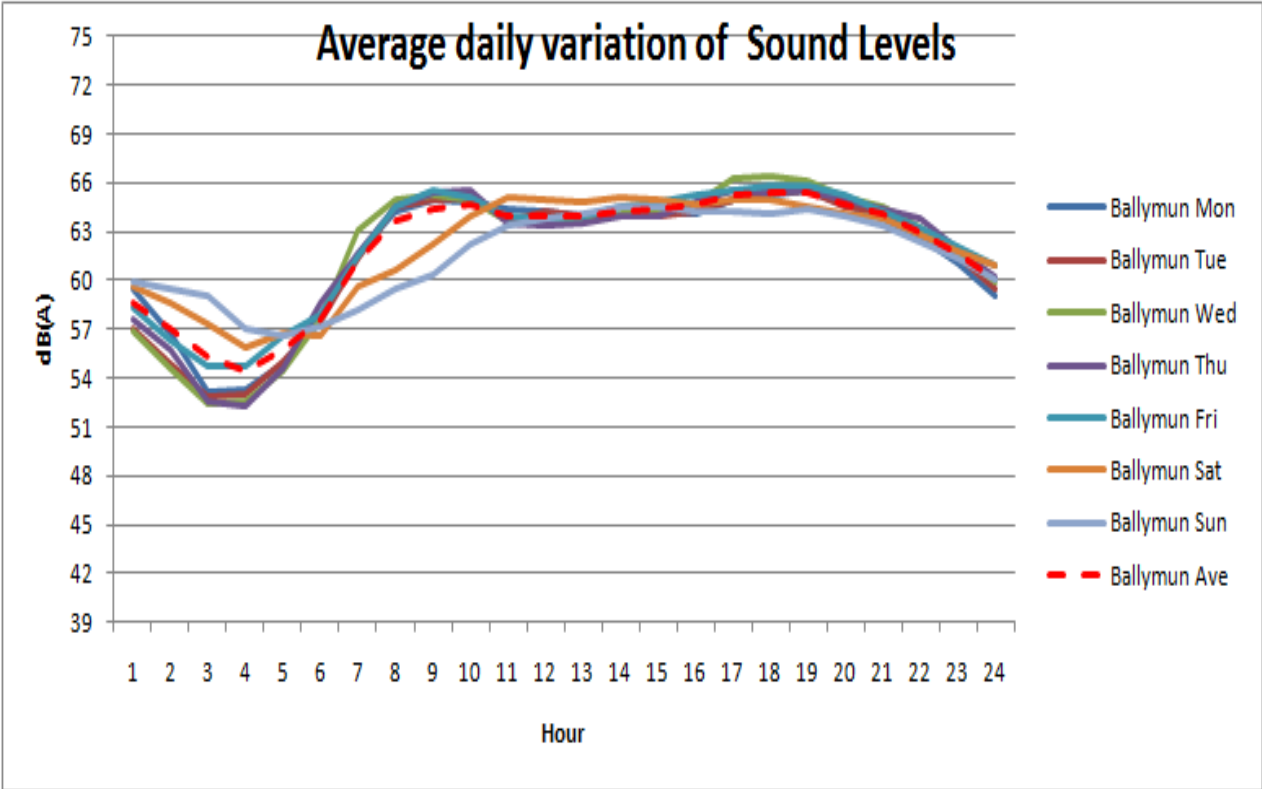
The median value is provided in the 'Hourly Value Charts'. This is represented by a red horizontal line which marks the mid-point of the hourly data above and below which 50% of the data resides, when arranged from the lowest value to the highest value. As already stated extreme values have less of an impact on median values than on mean (average) values.

Fig.4

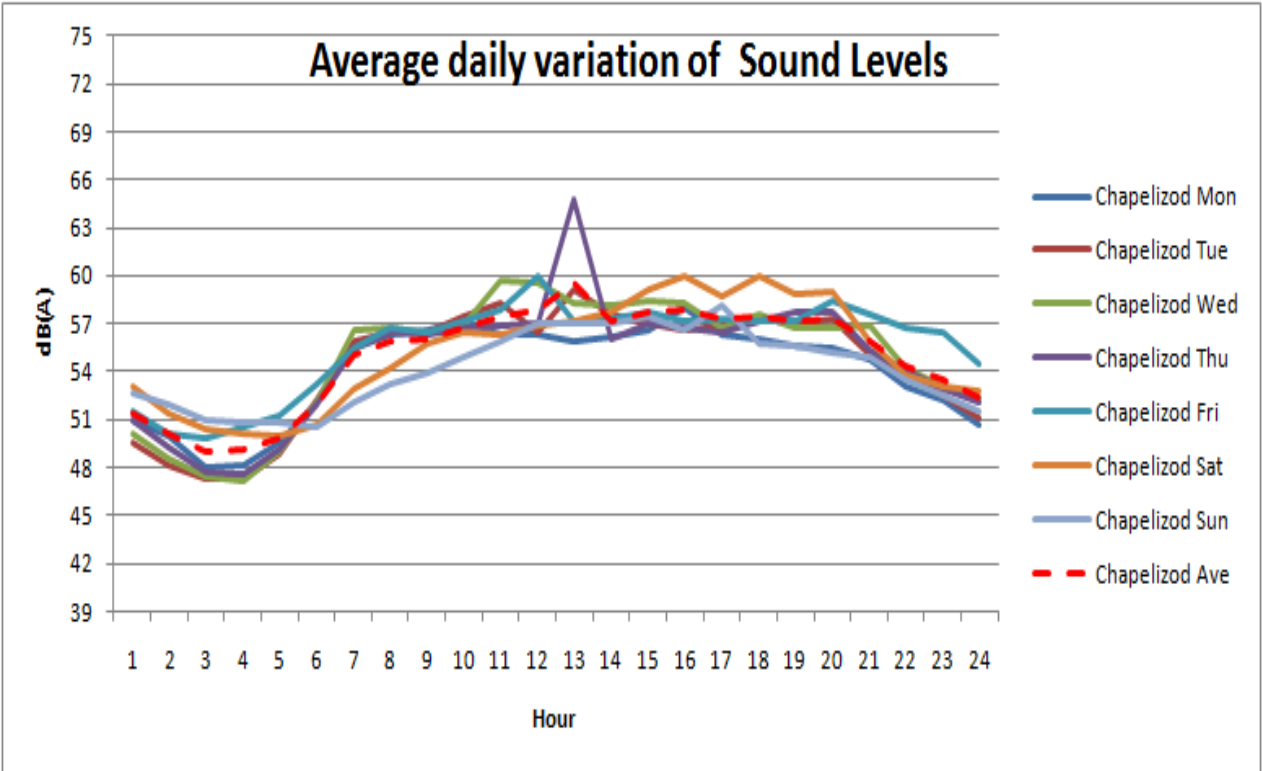


Average Daily Summary Charts

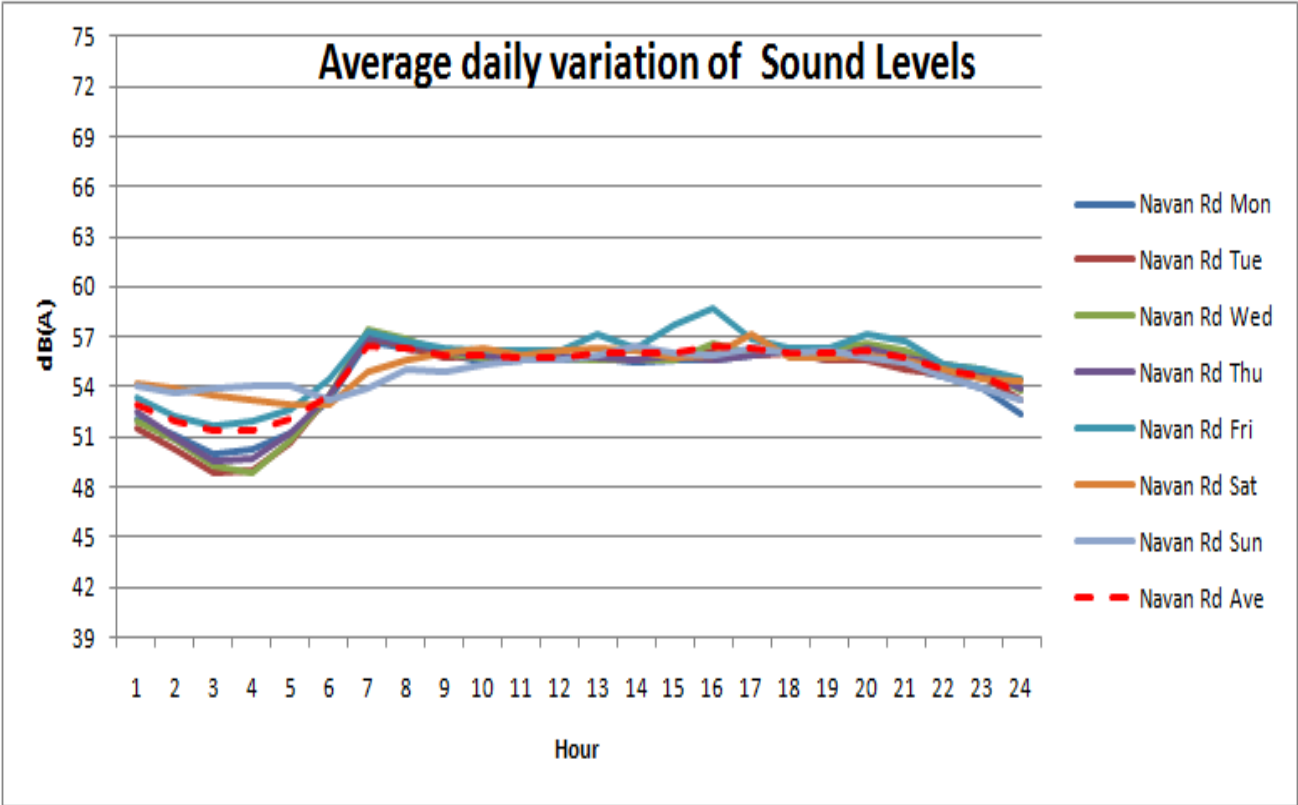
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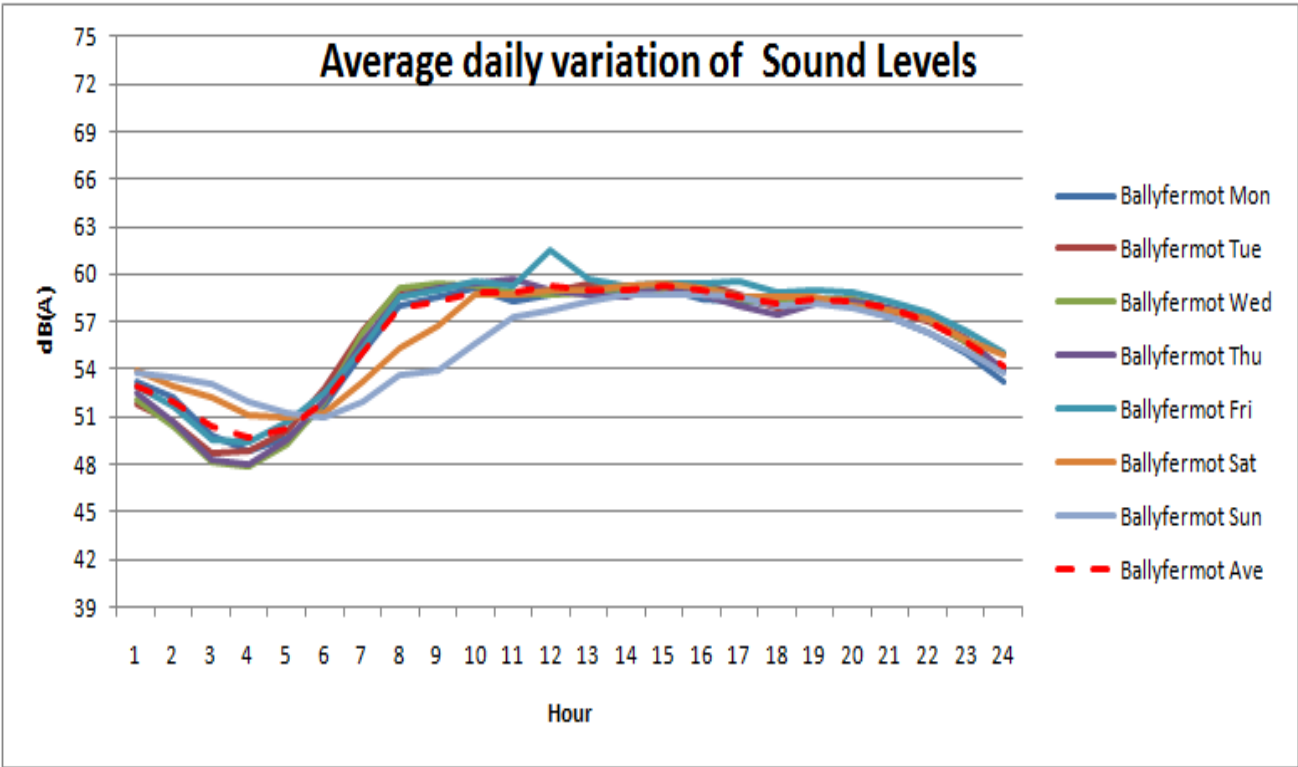
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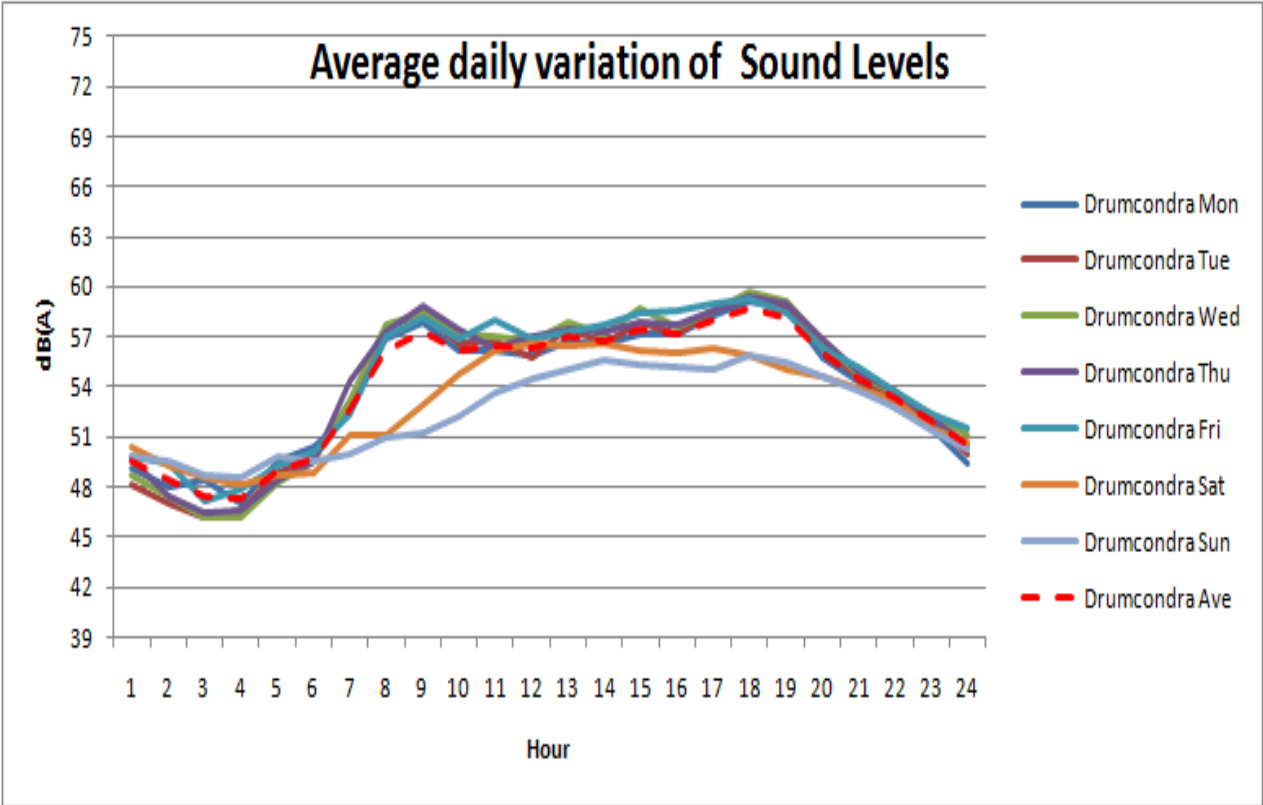
NAVAN RD.



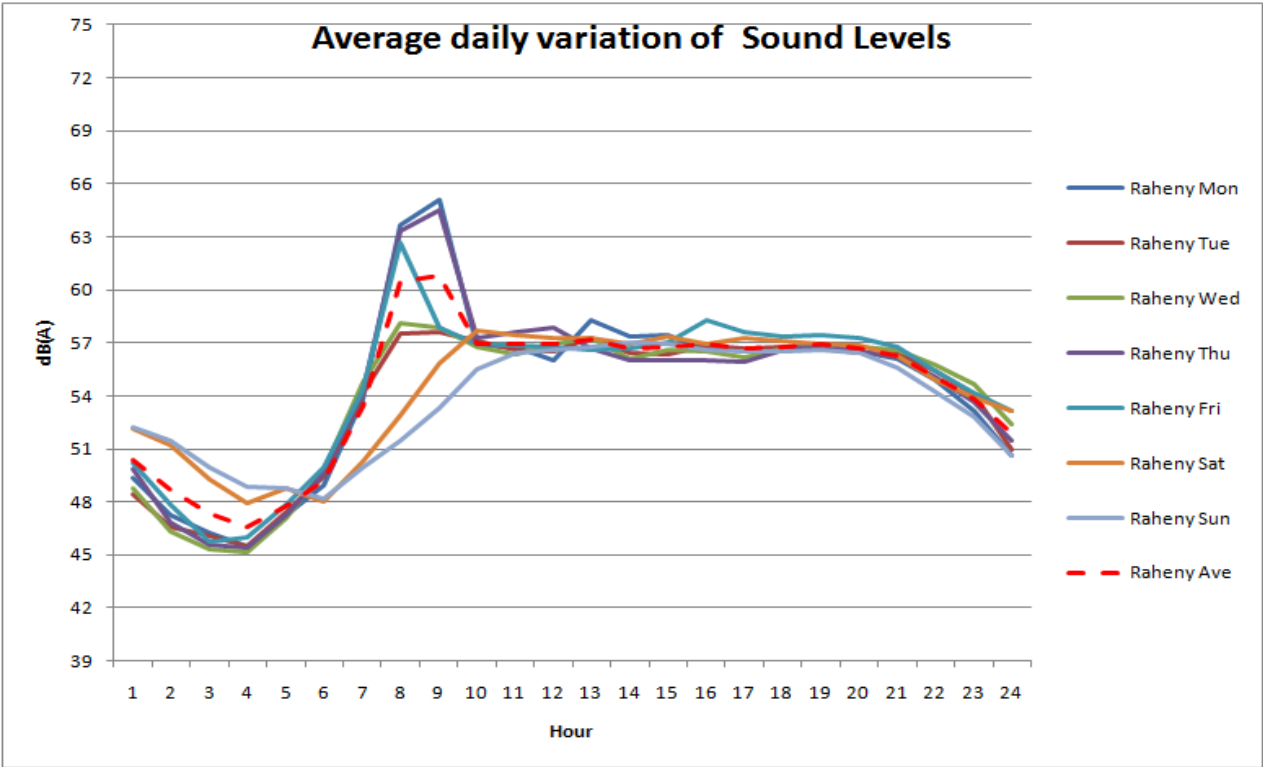
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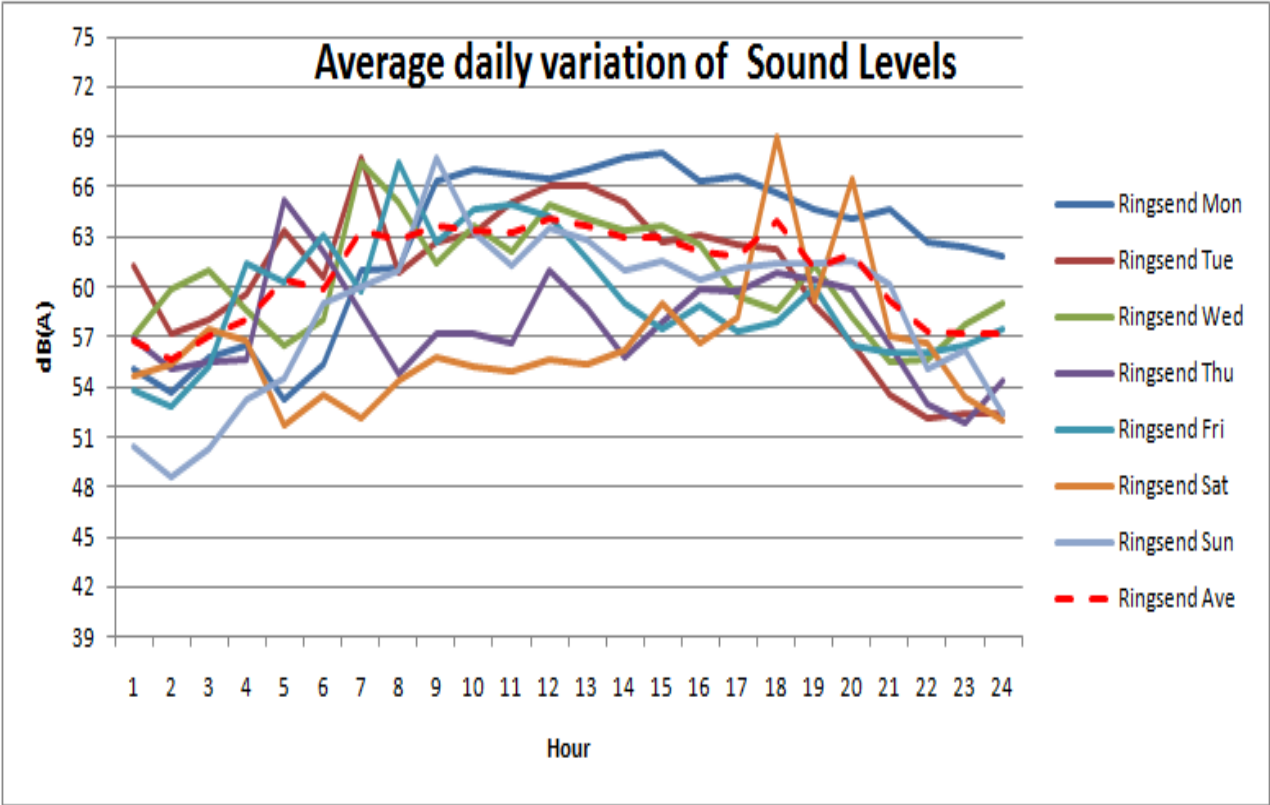
DRUMCONDRA



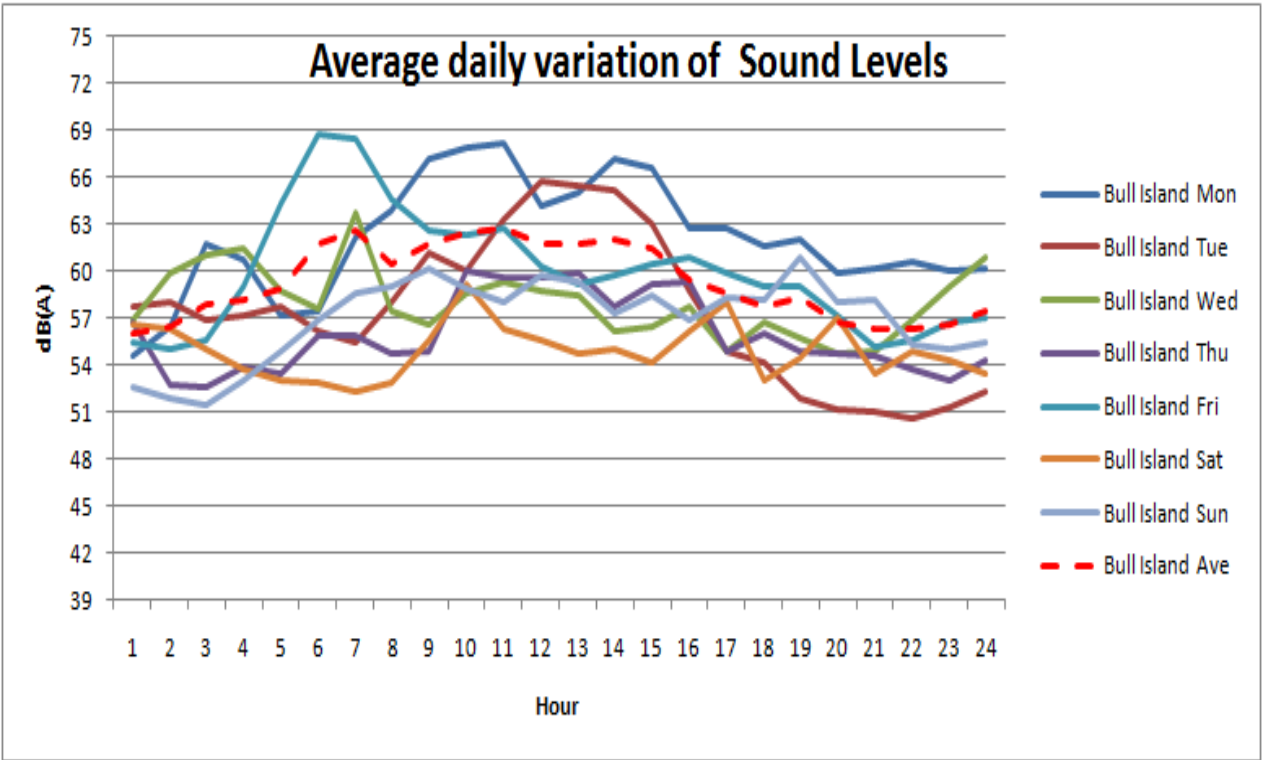
RAHENY



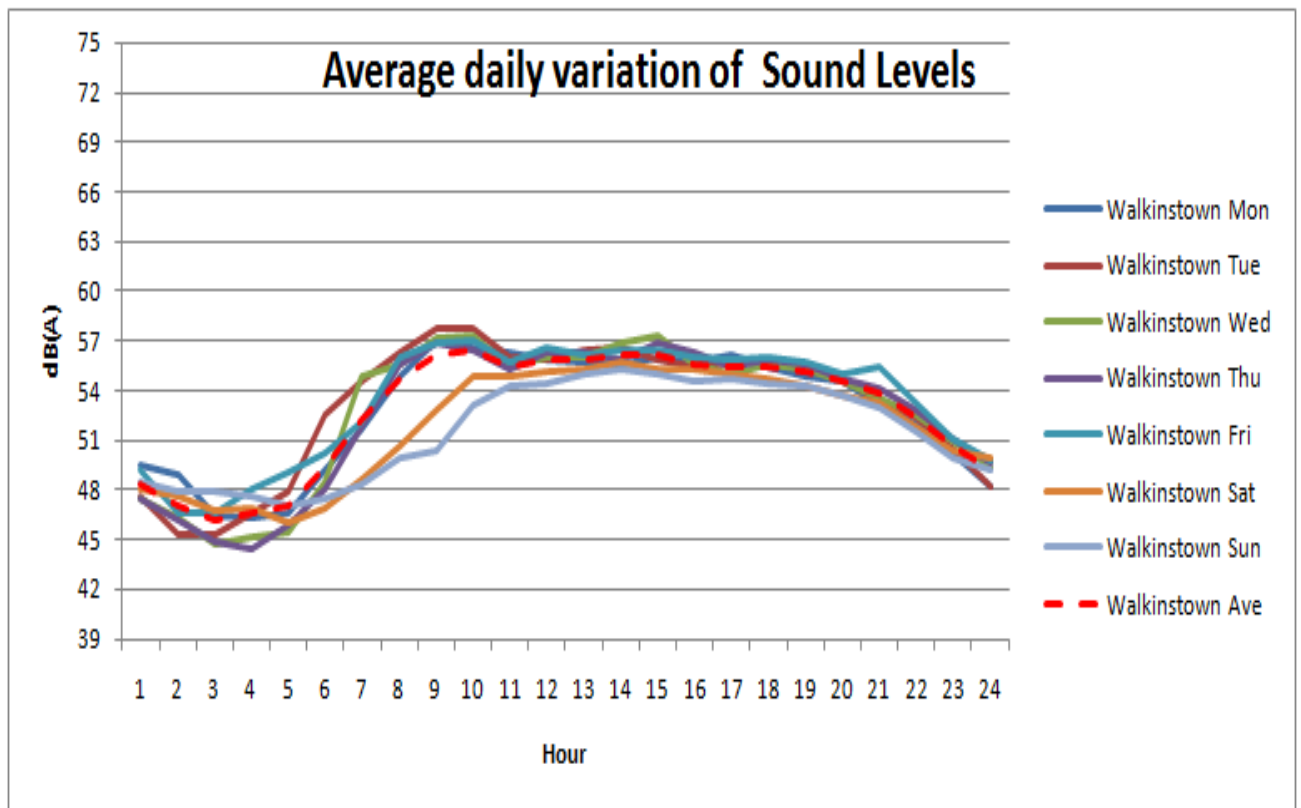
RINGSEND



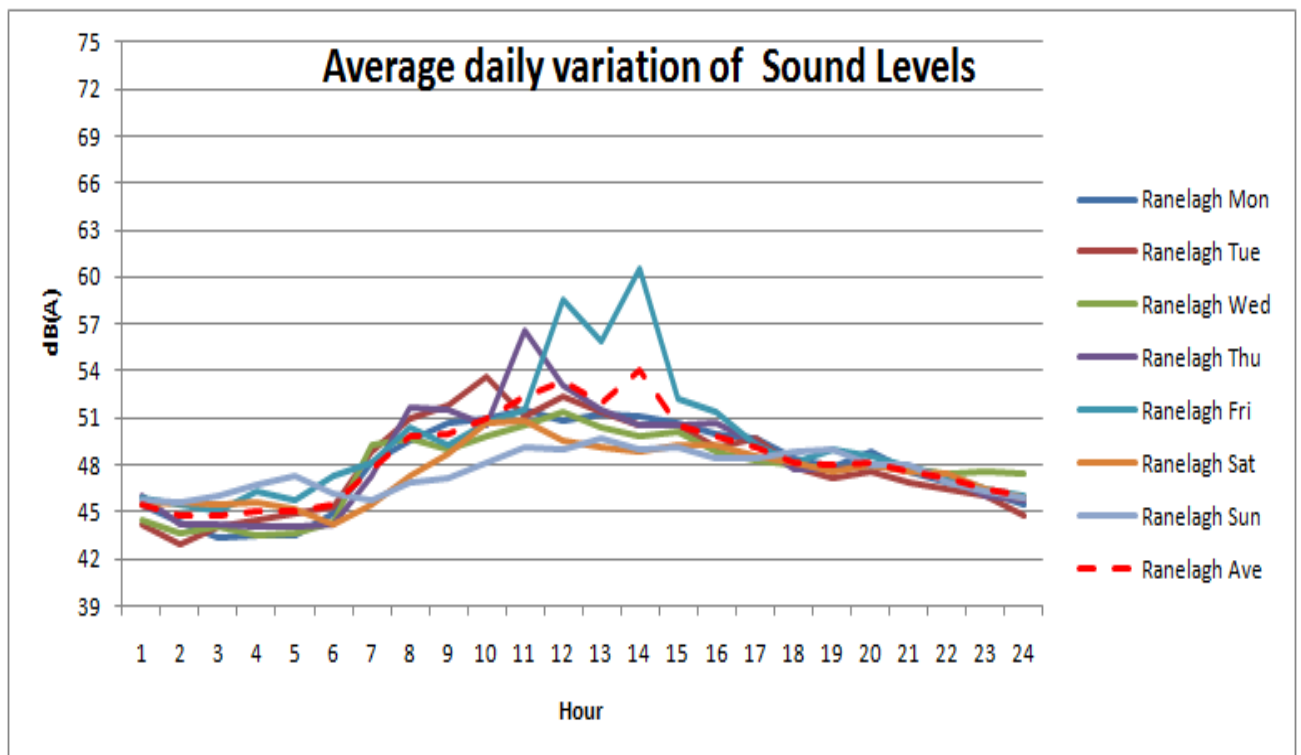
BULL ISLAND



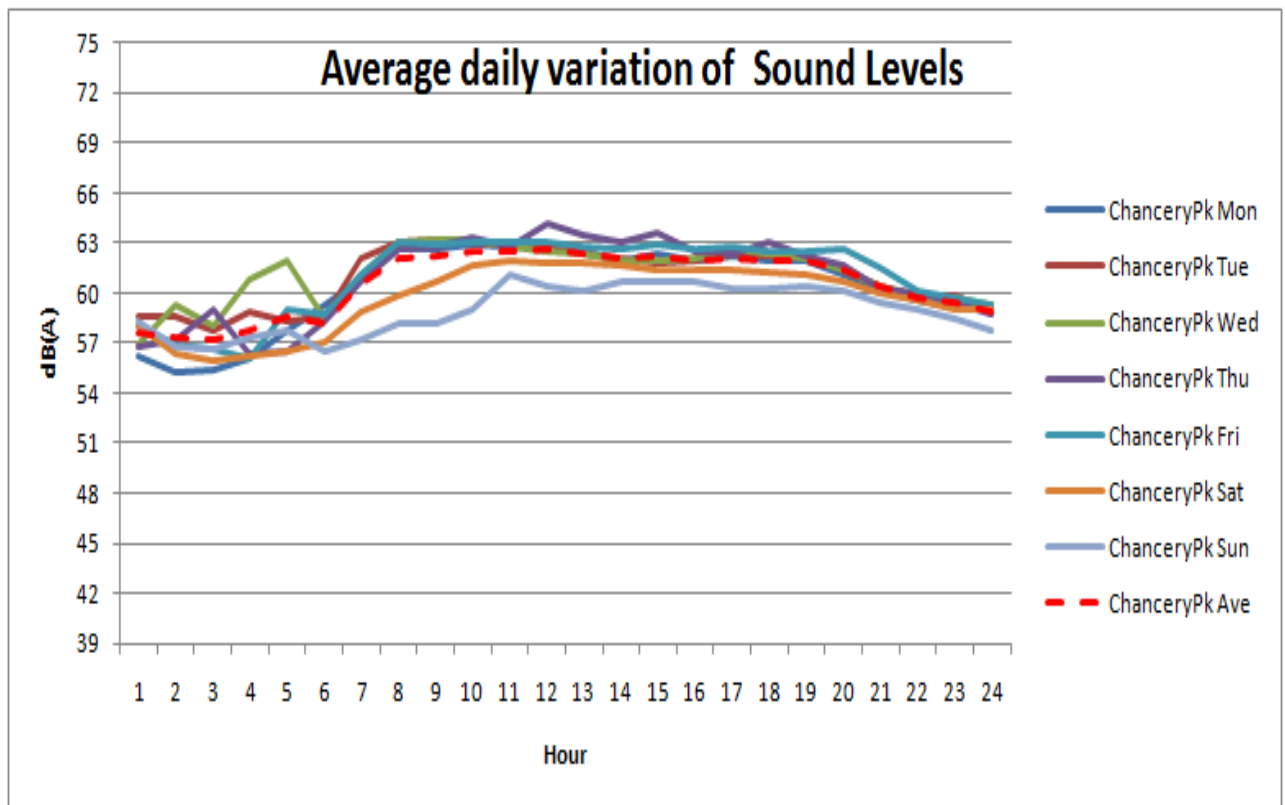
WALKINSTOWN



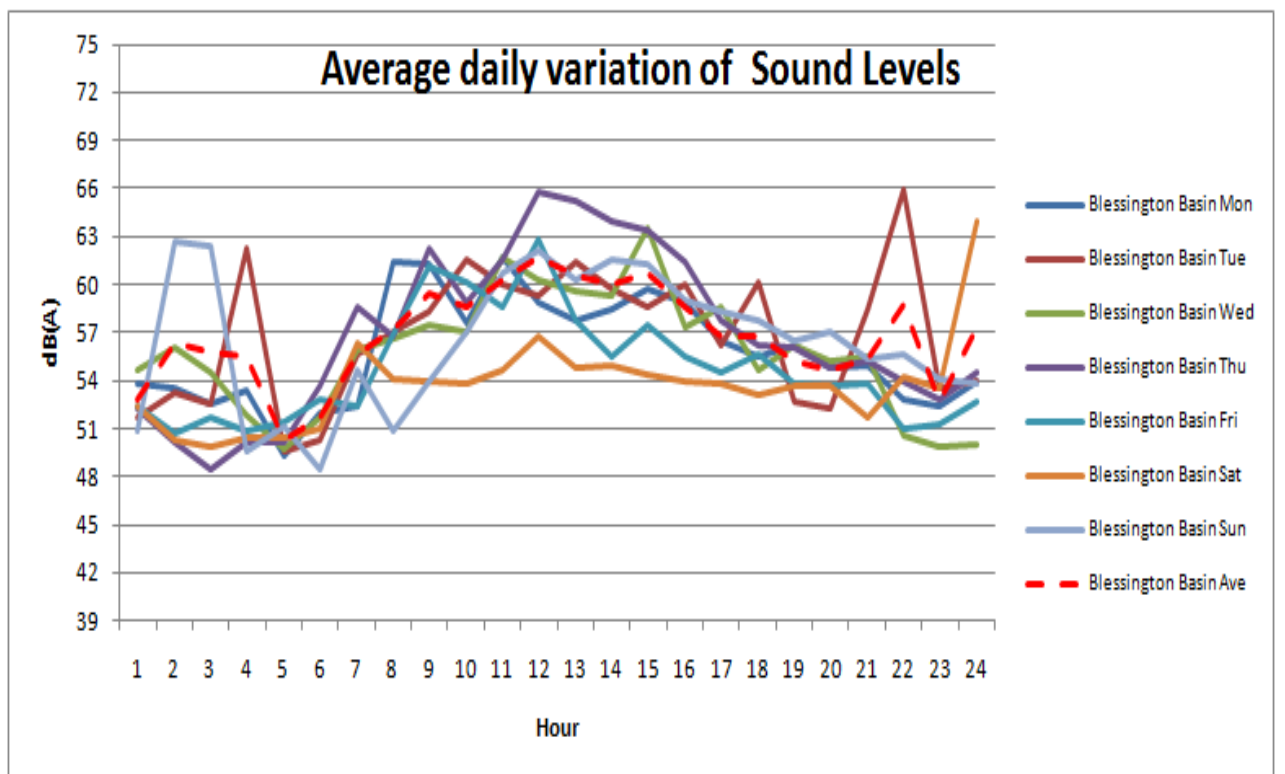
RANELAGH



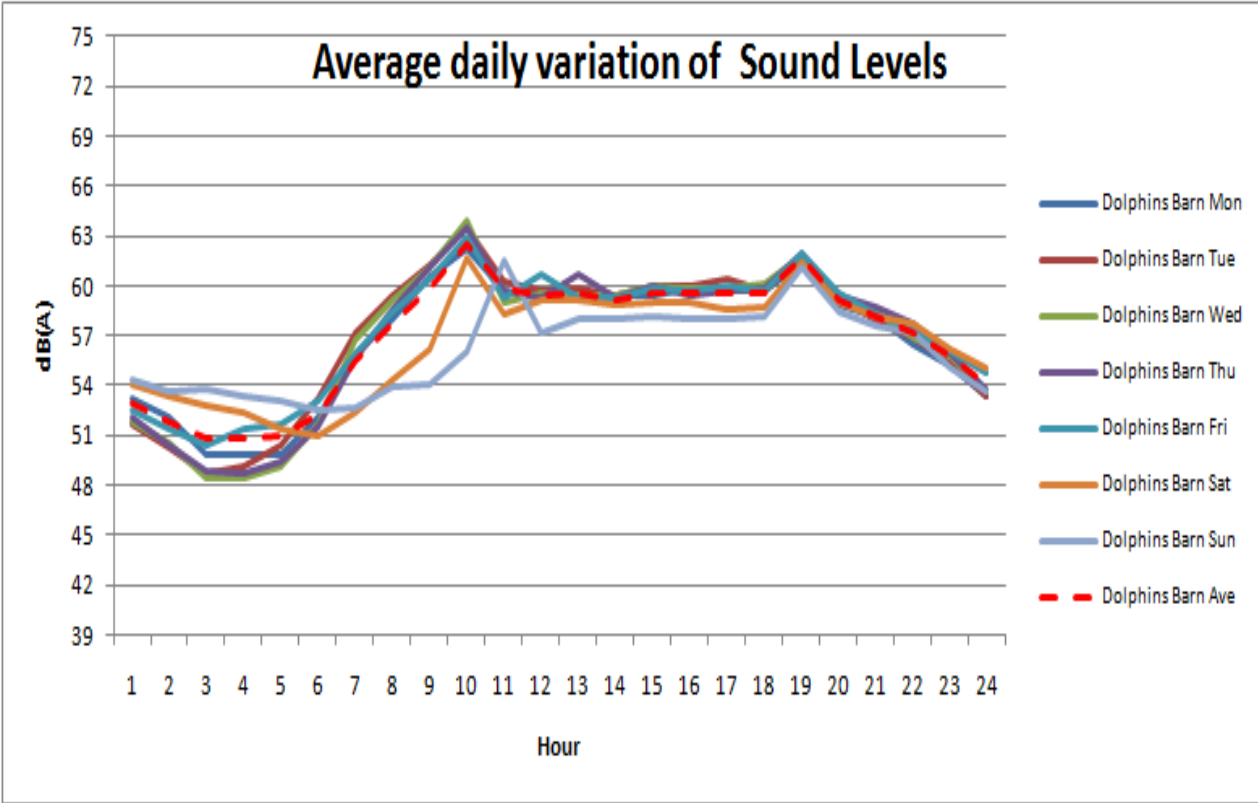
CHANCERY PARK



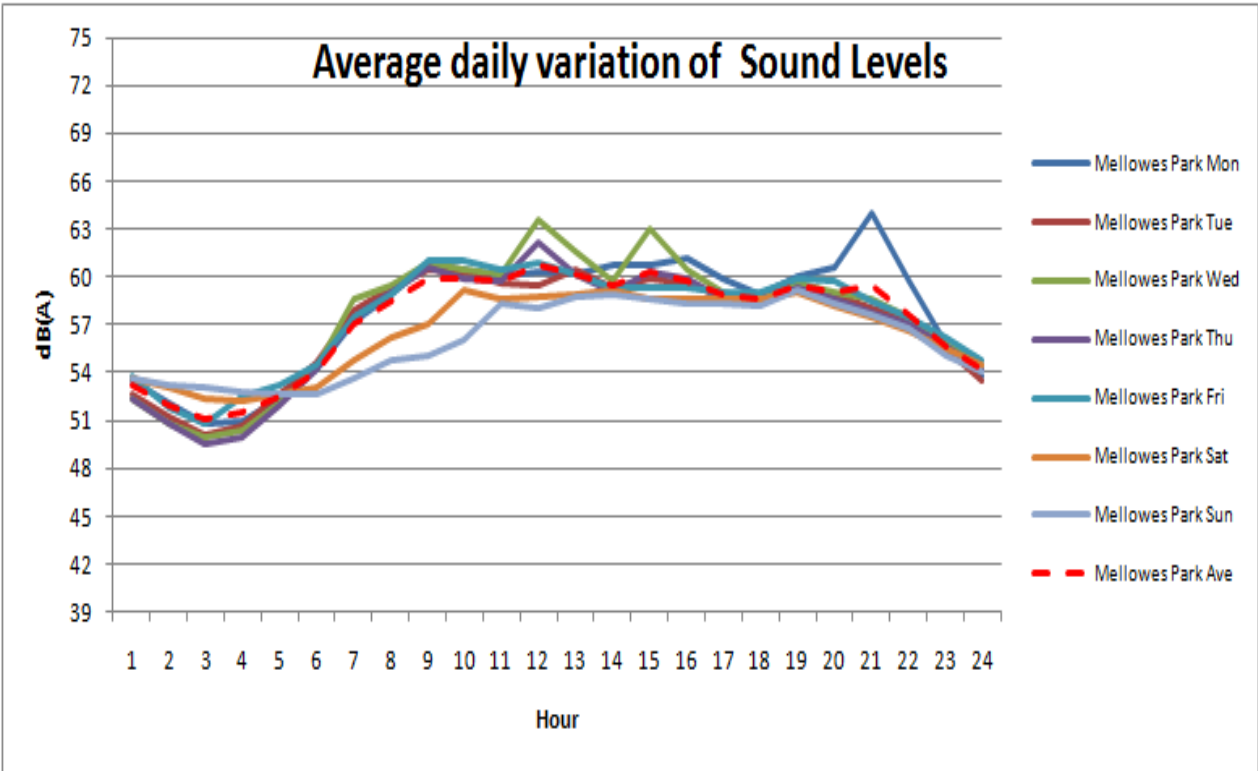
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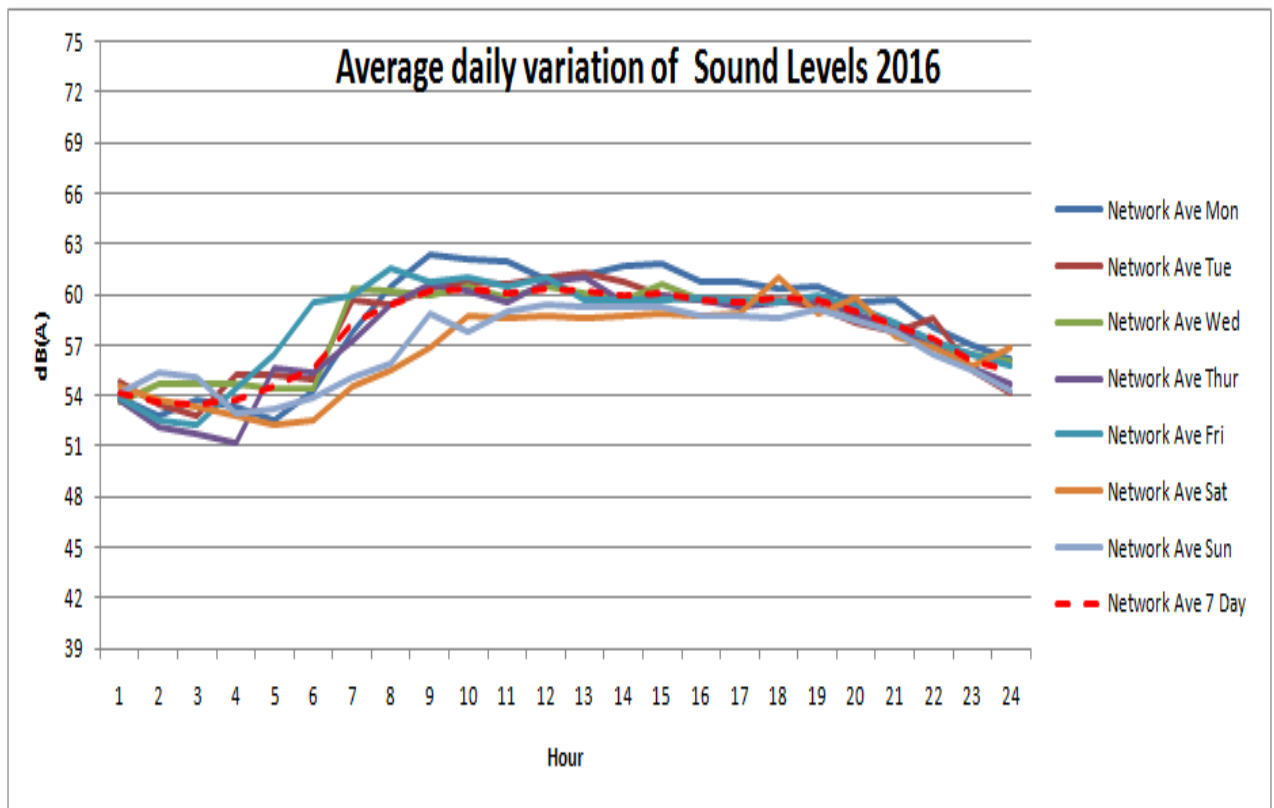
DOLPHIN’S BARN



MELLOW’S PARK



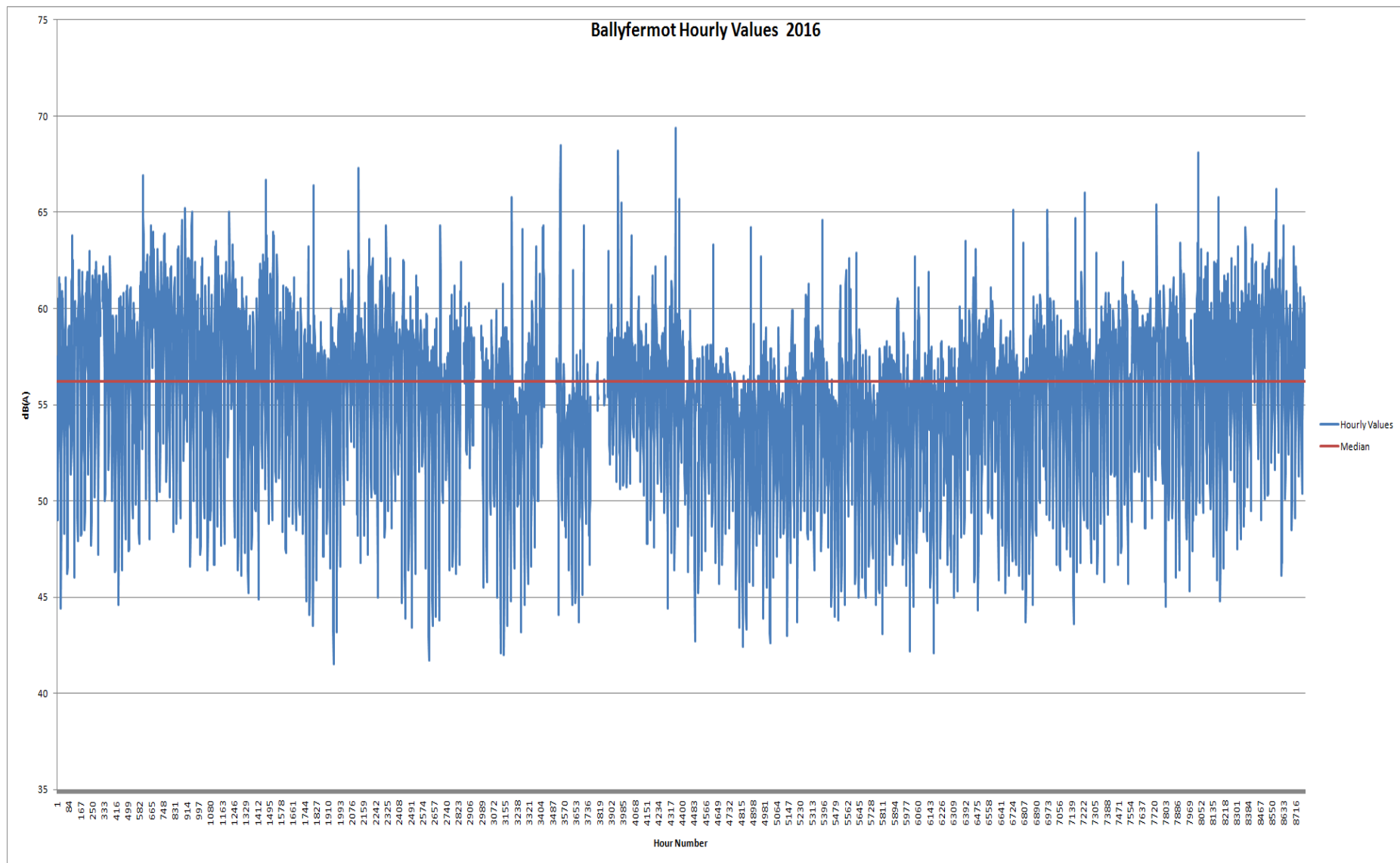
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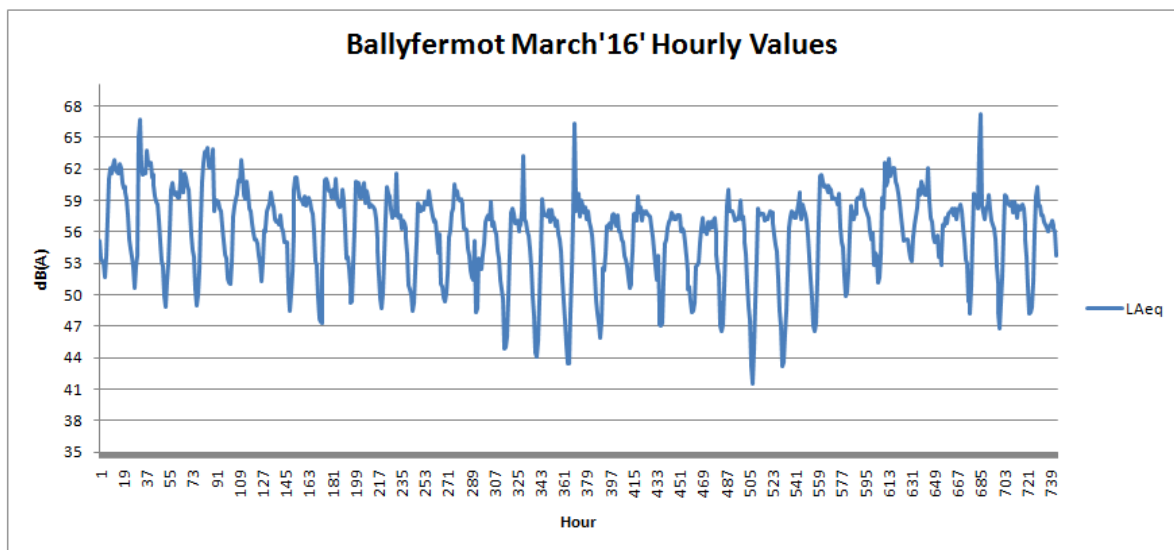
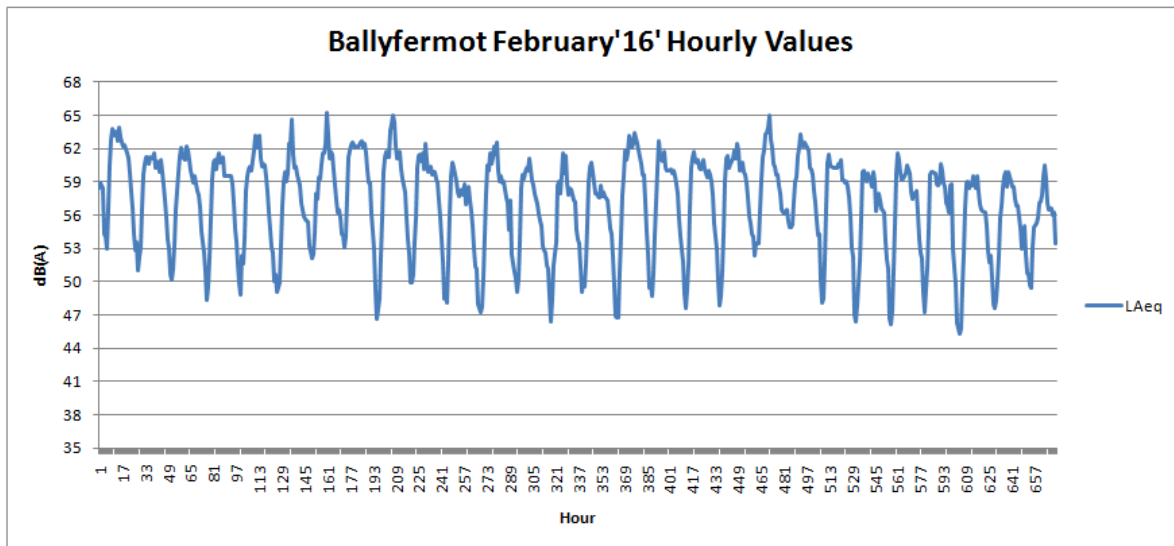
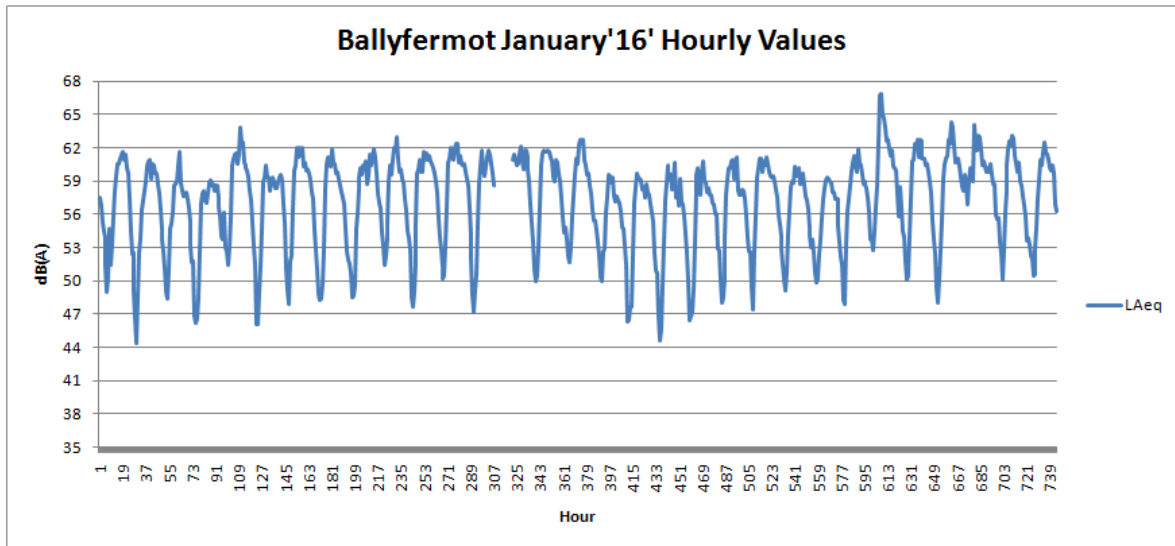


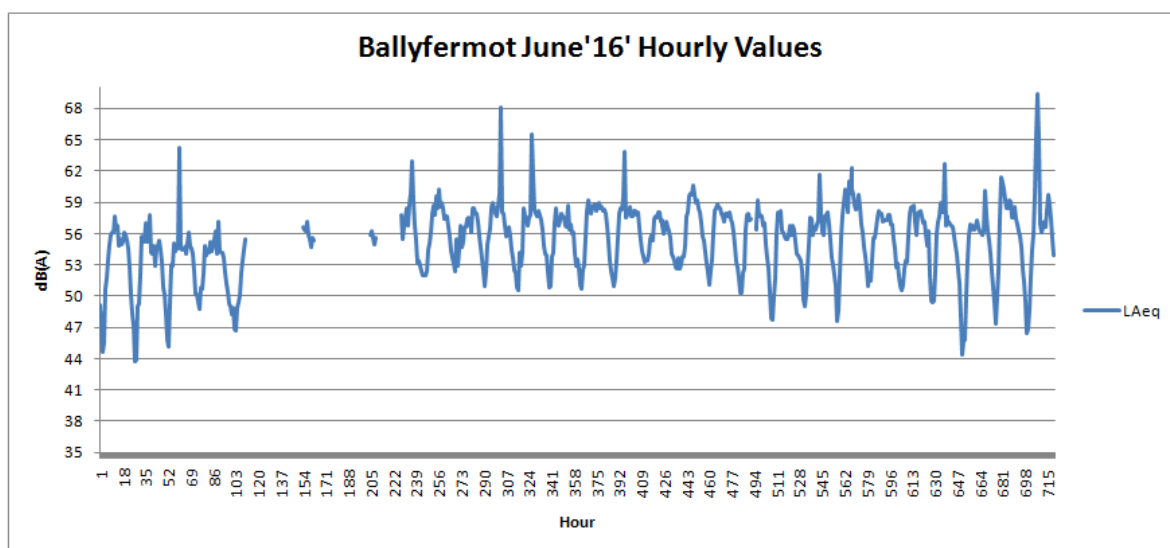
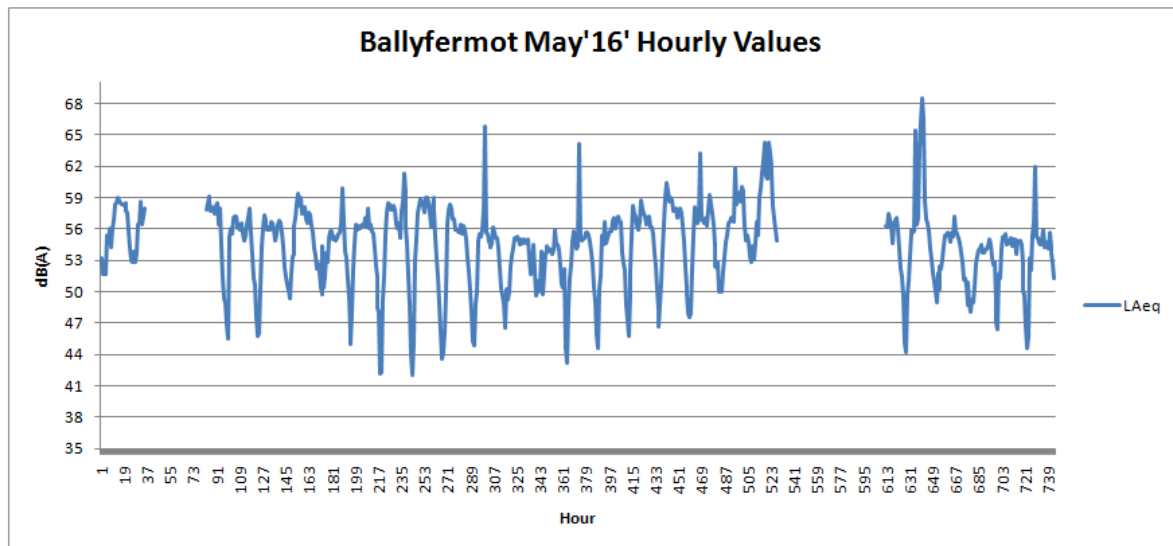
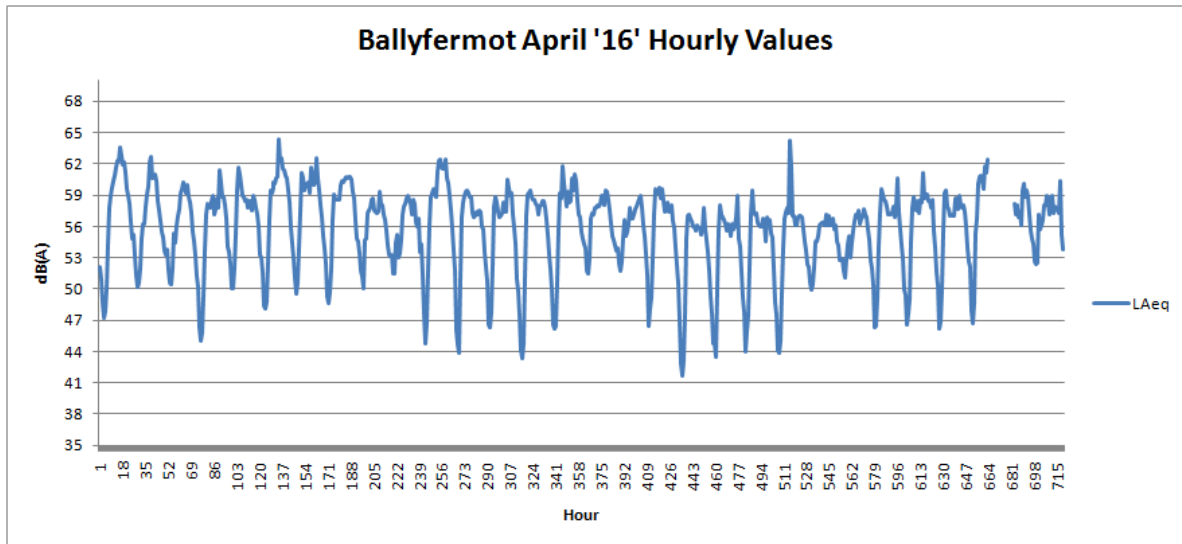
Monthly Summary Charts

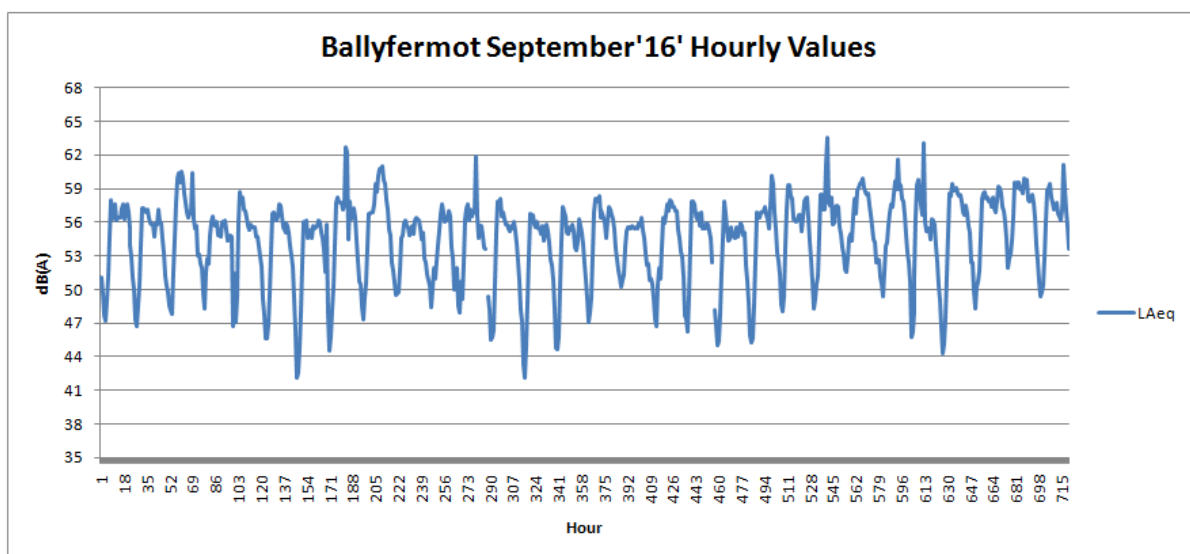
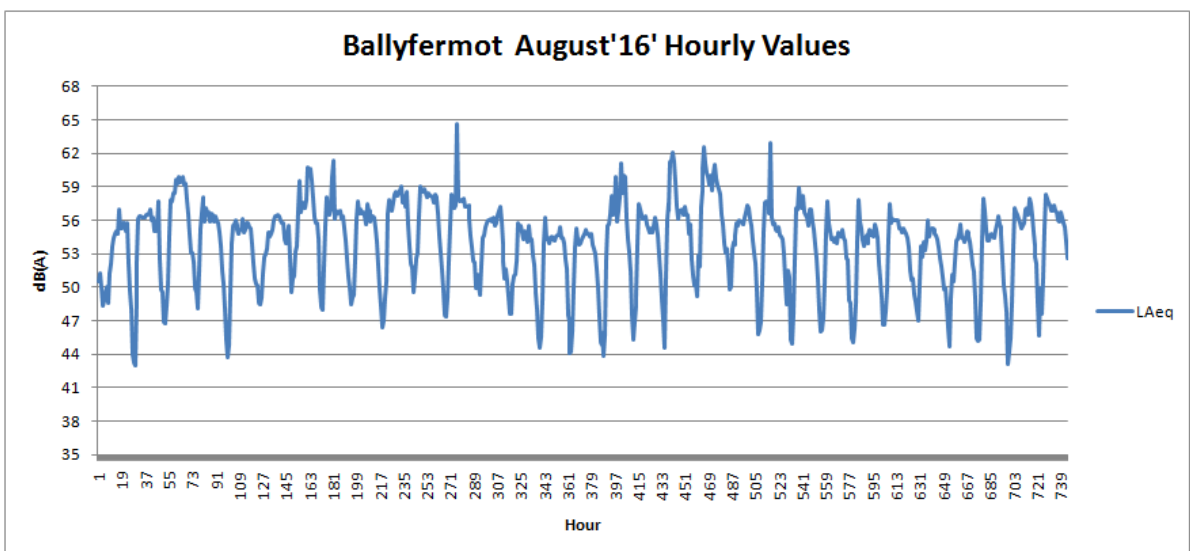
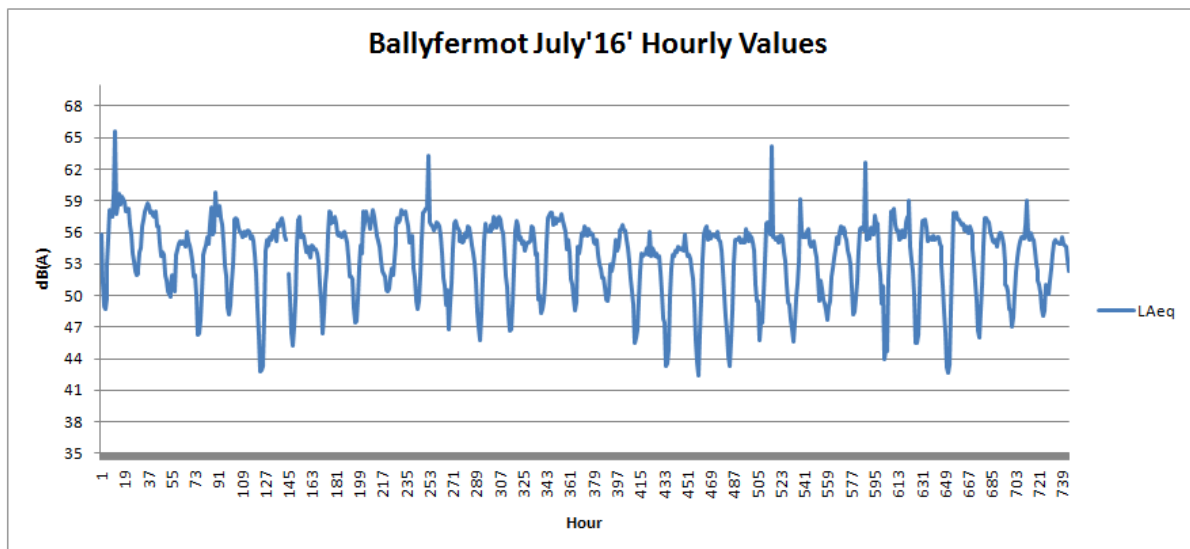
BALLYFERMOT CIVIC CENTRE
BALLYFERMOT ROAD
DUBLIN 10

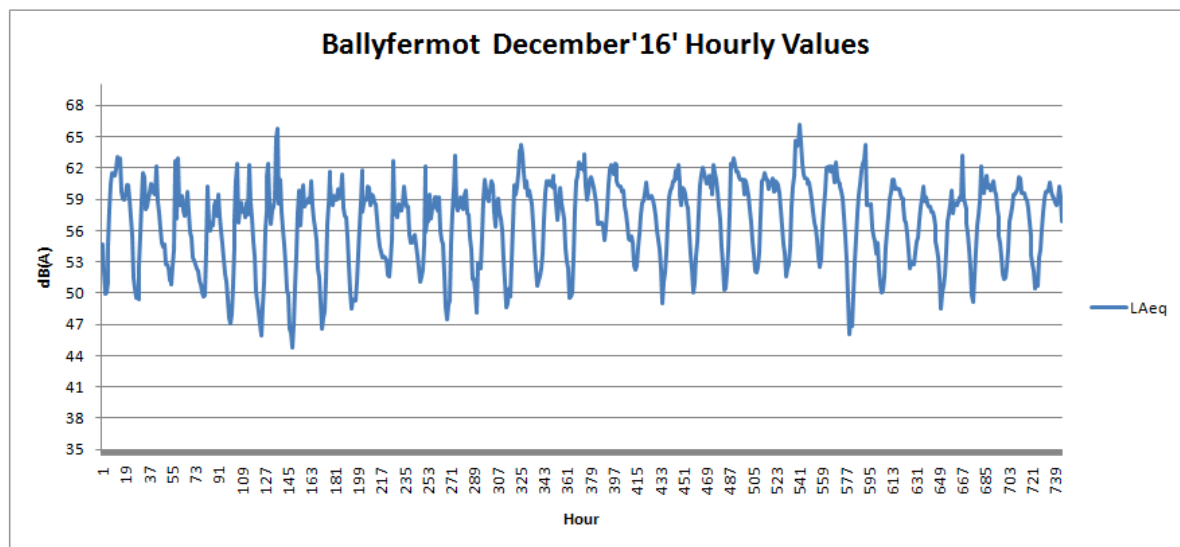
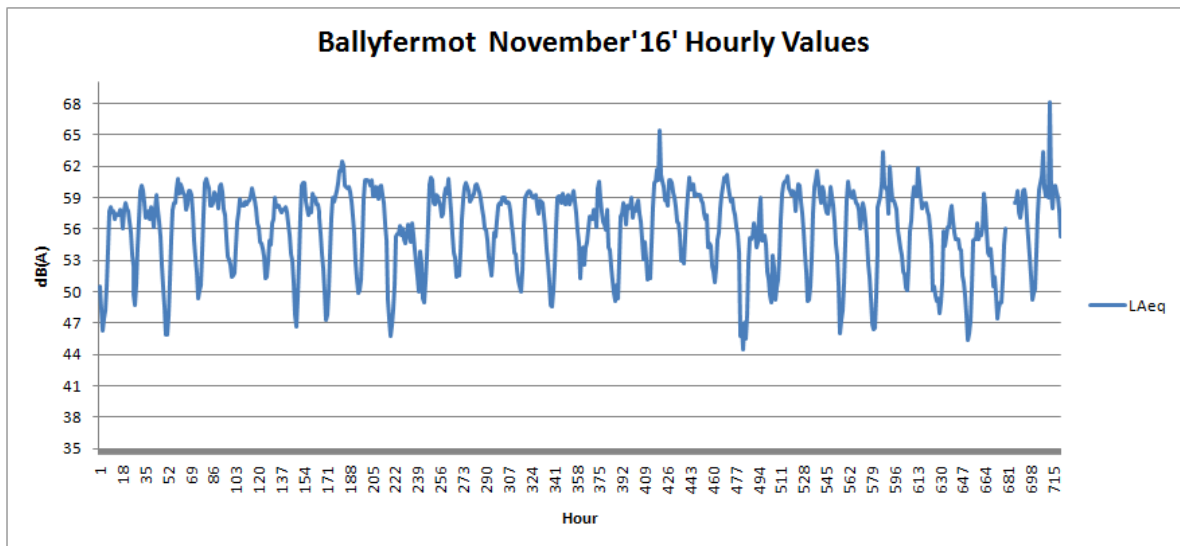
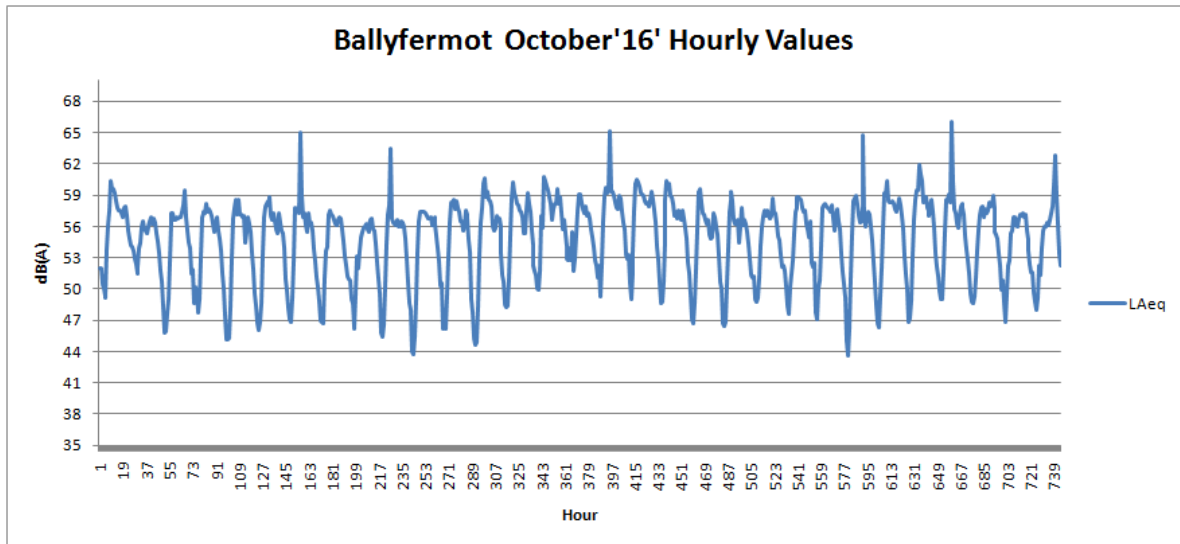






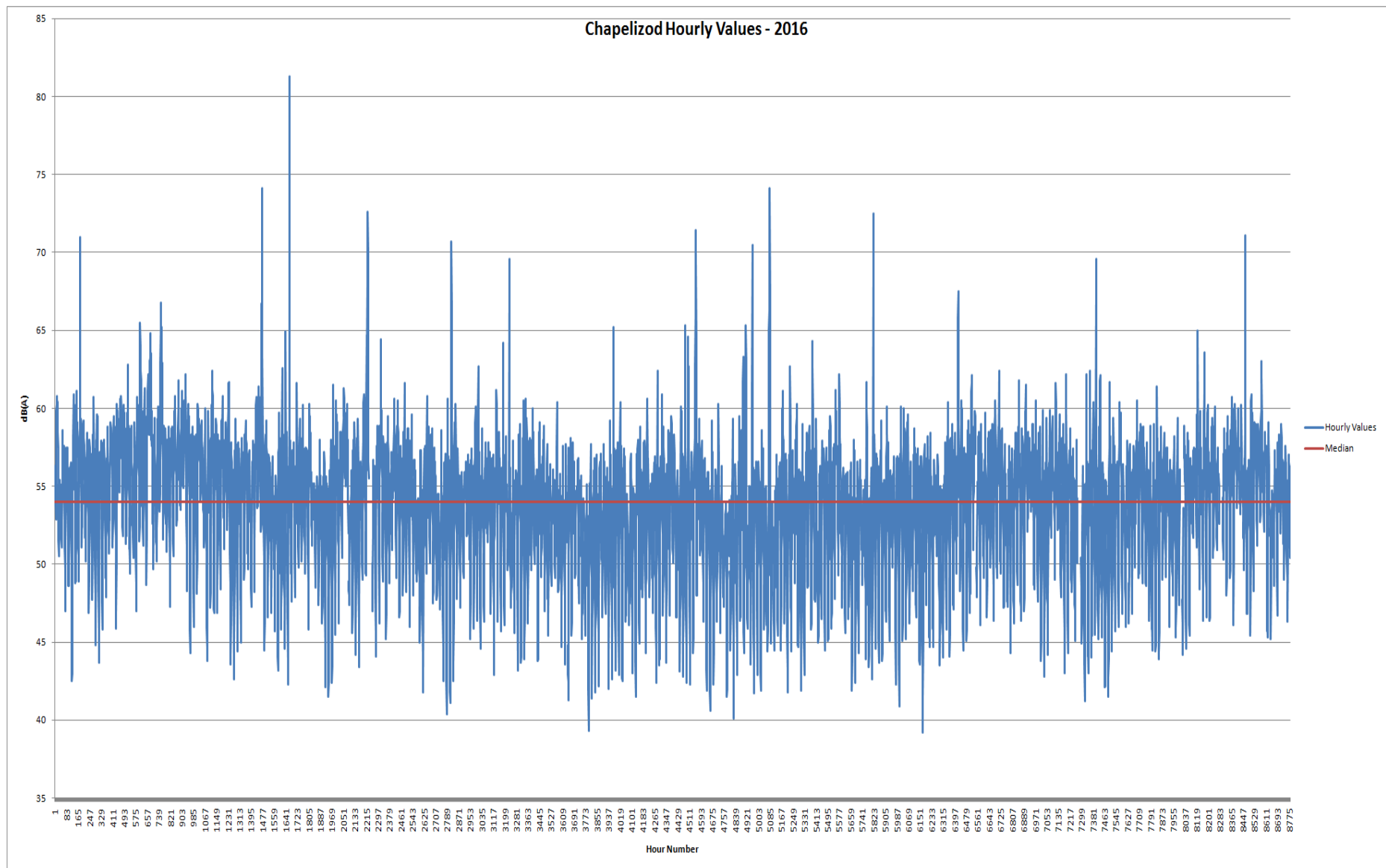


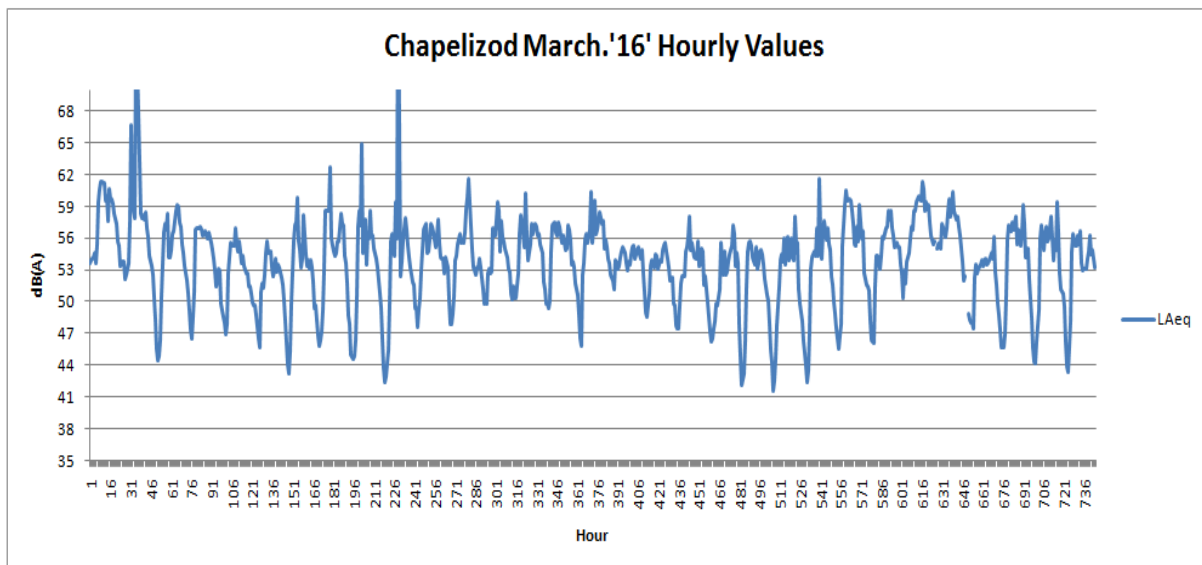
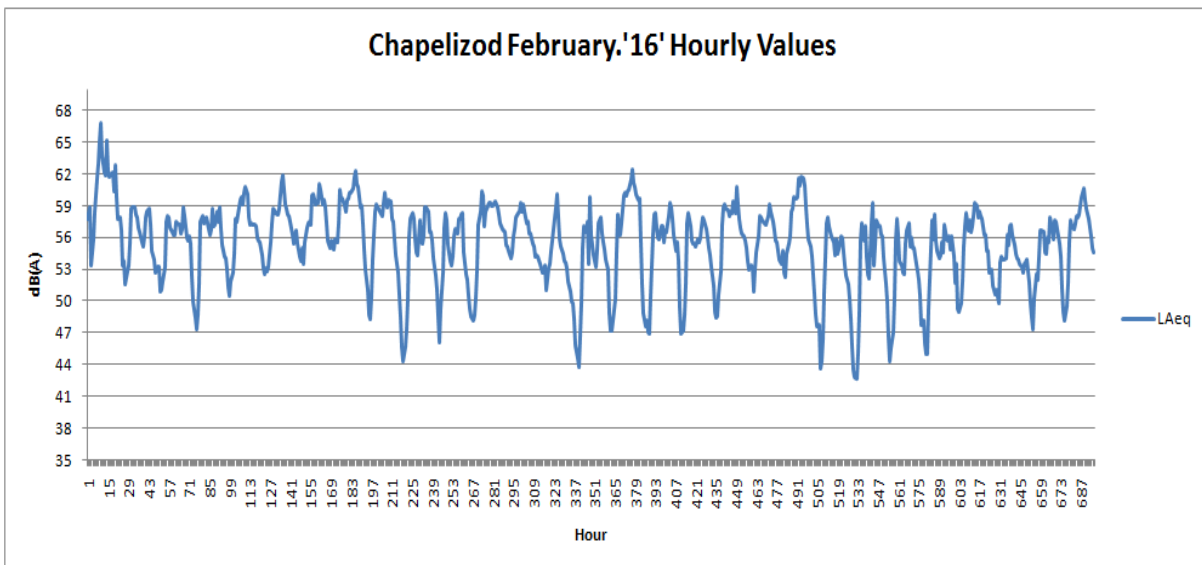
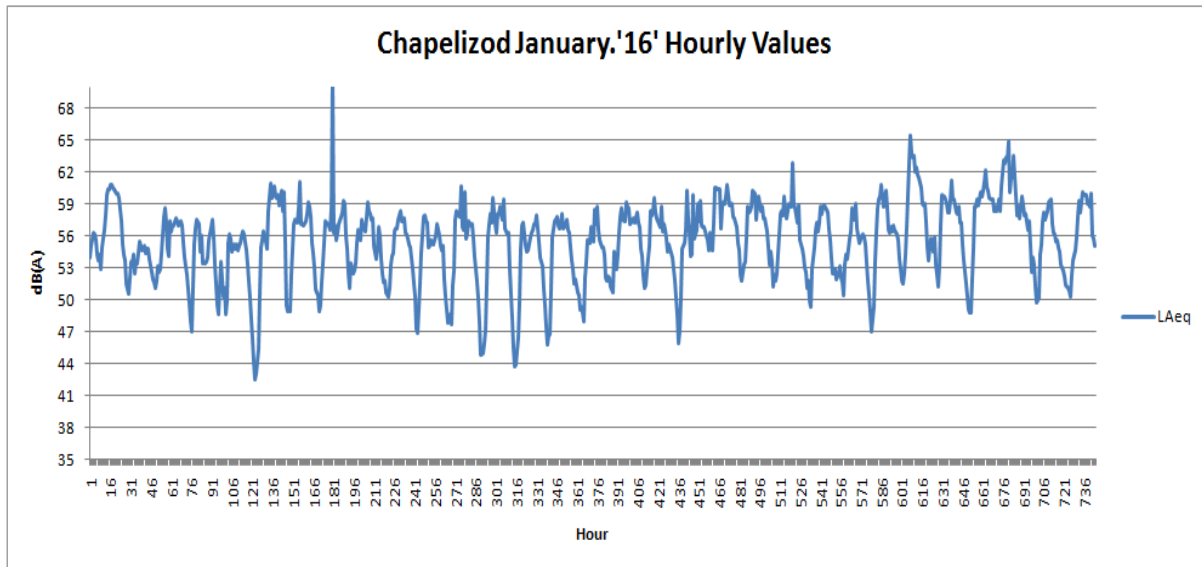


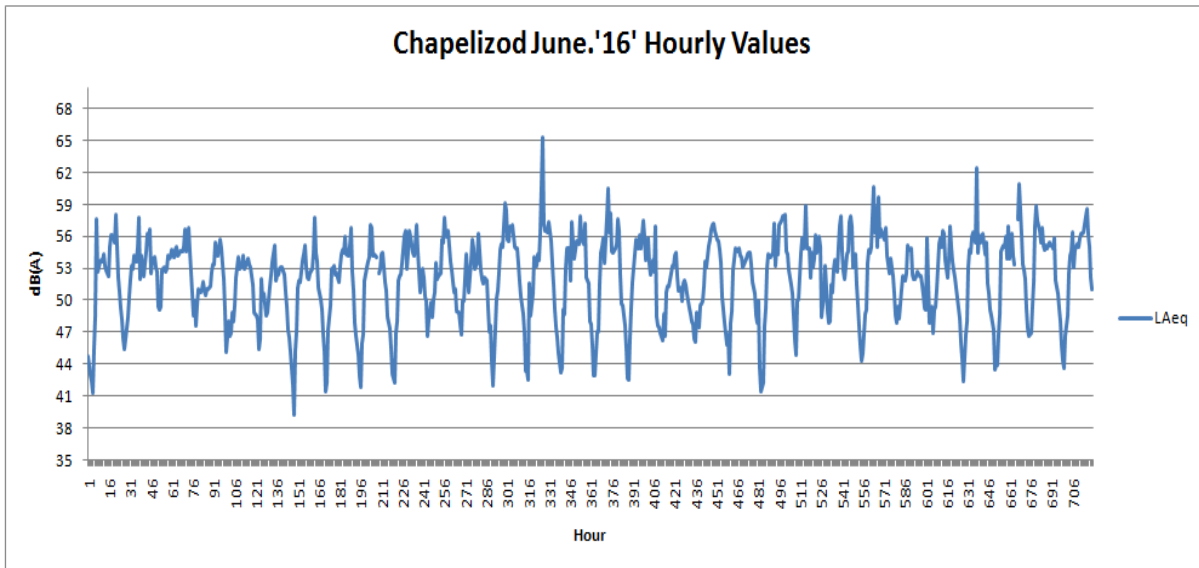
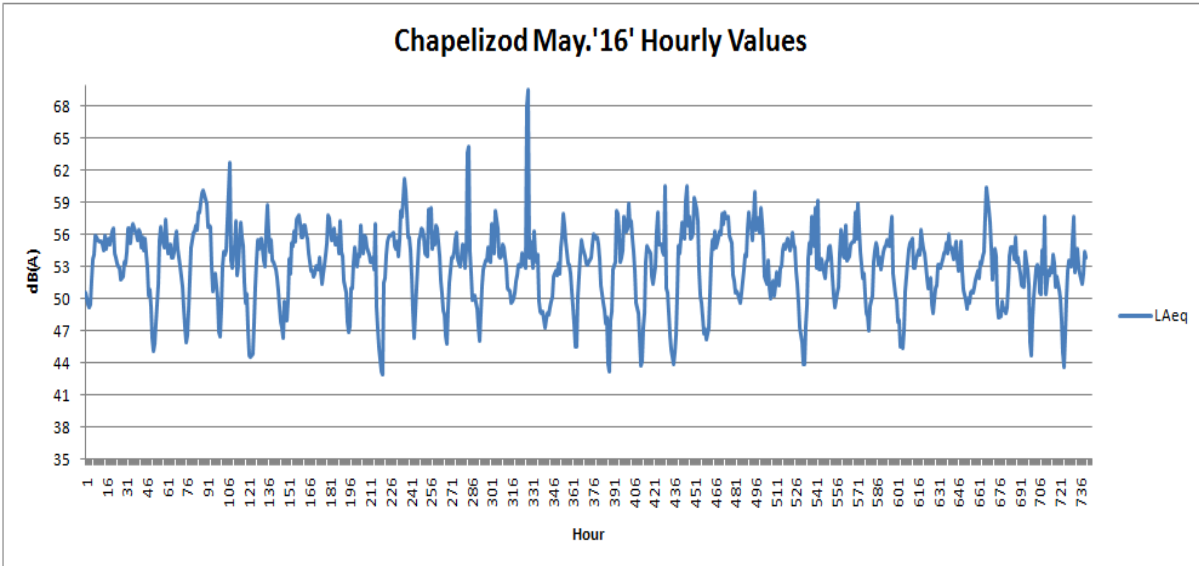
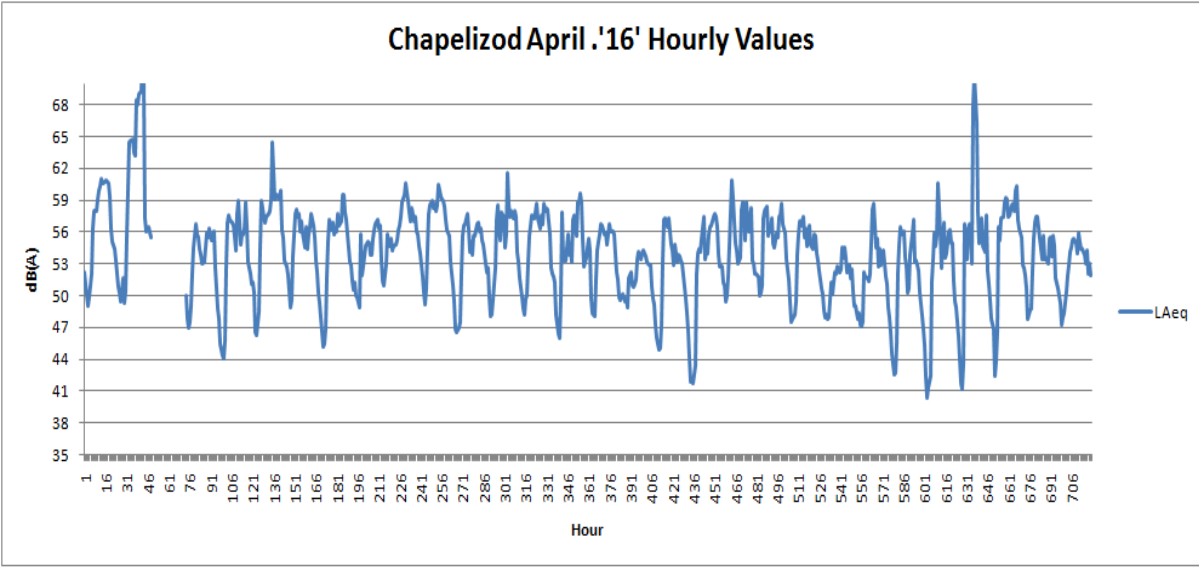


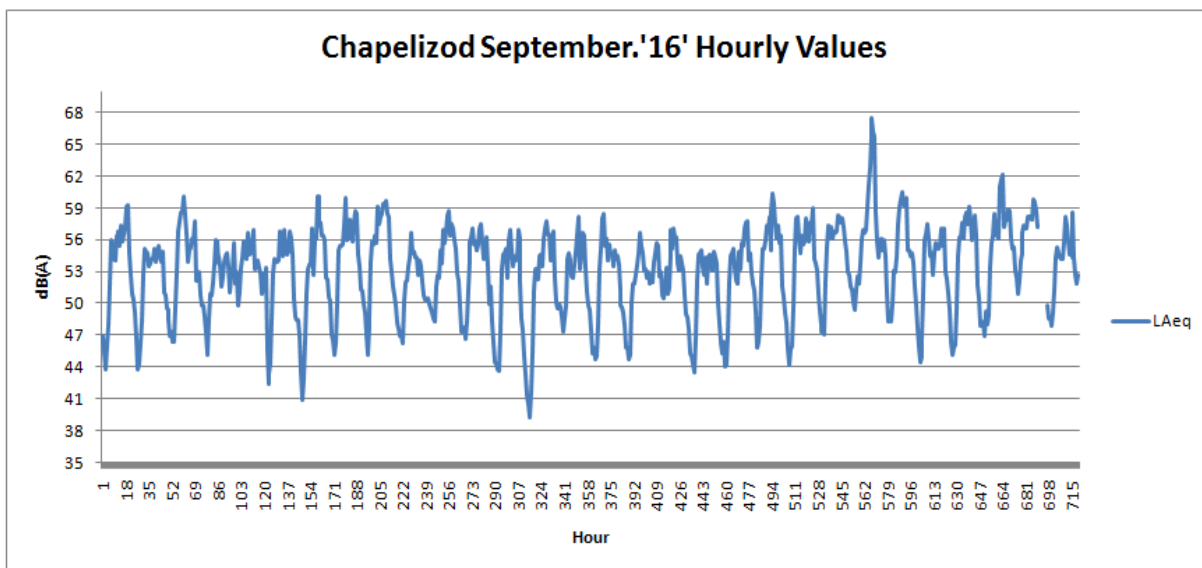
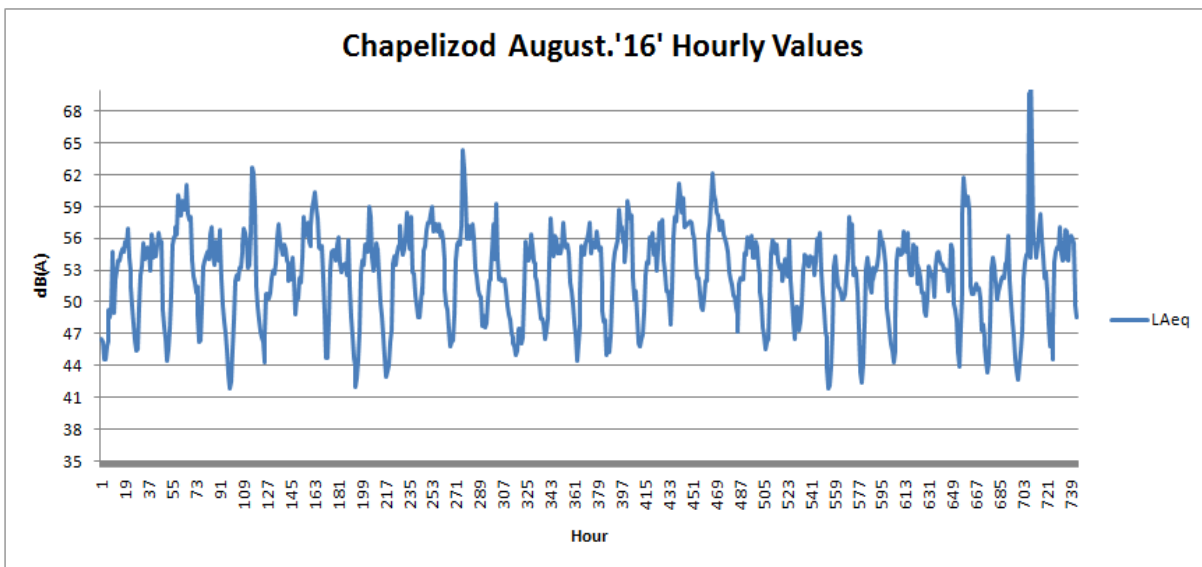
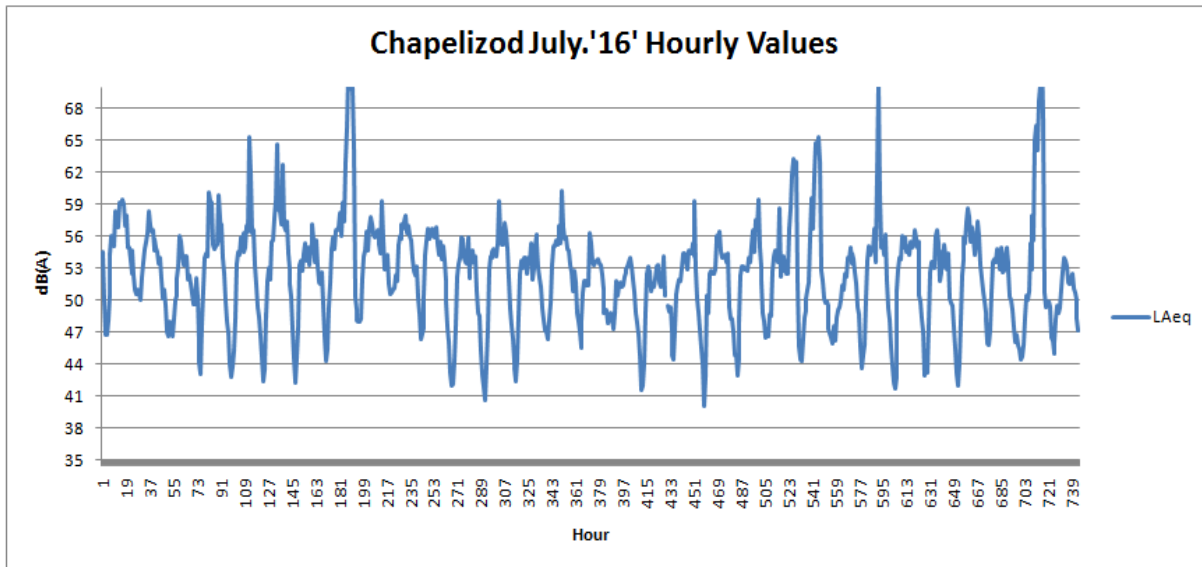
DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL ROWING CLUB
CHAPELIZOD ROAD
DUBLIN 8



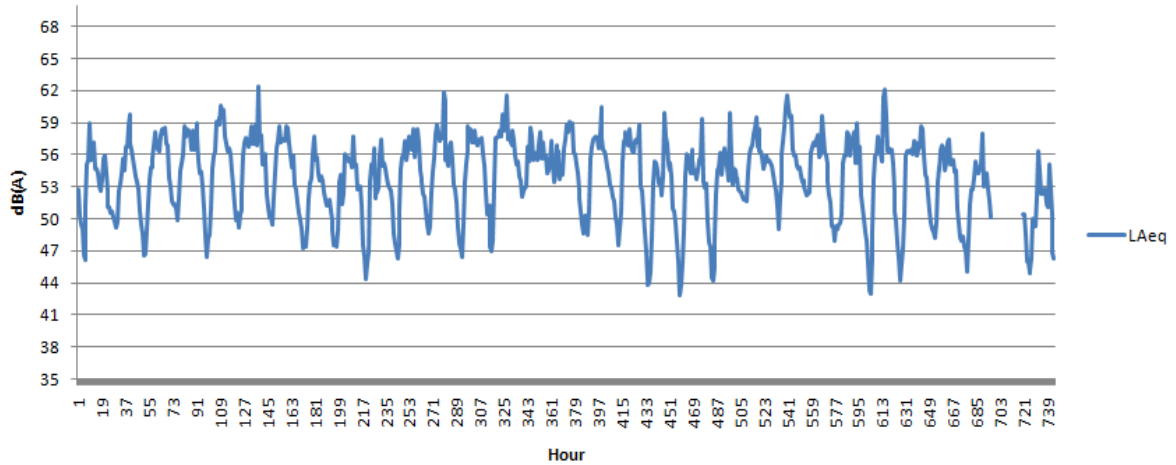




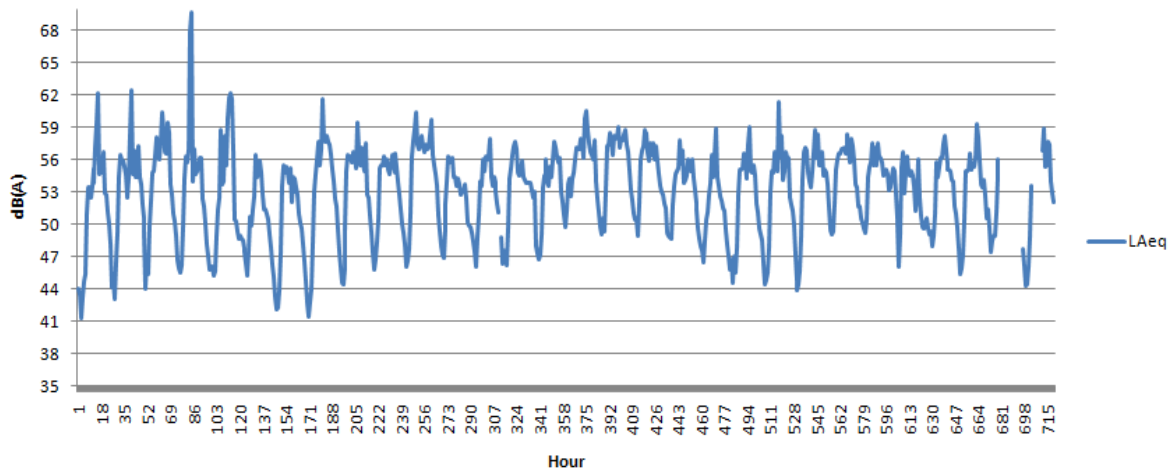




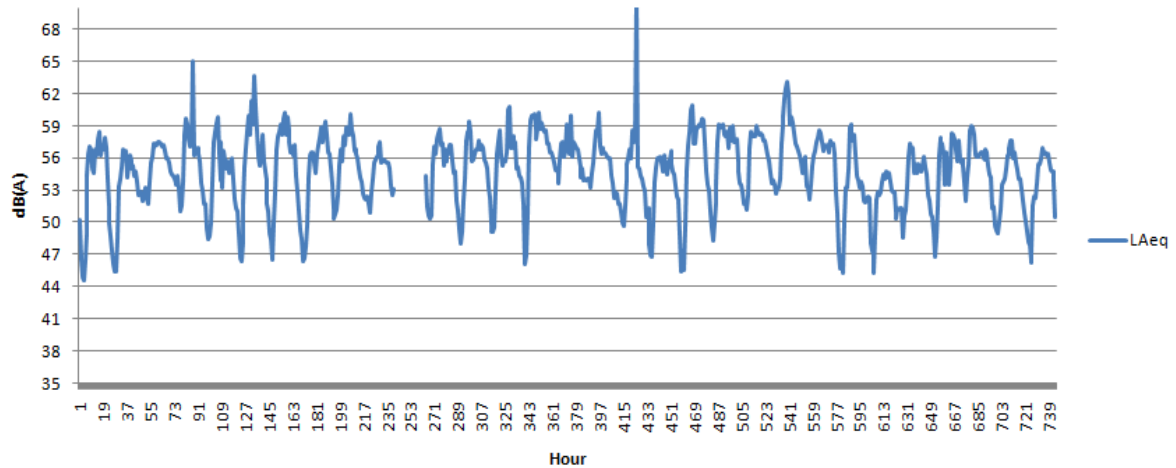
Chapelizod October.'16' Hourly Values



Chapelizod November.'16' Hourly Values

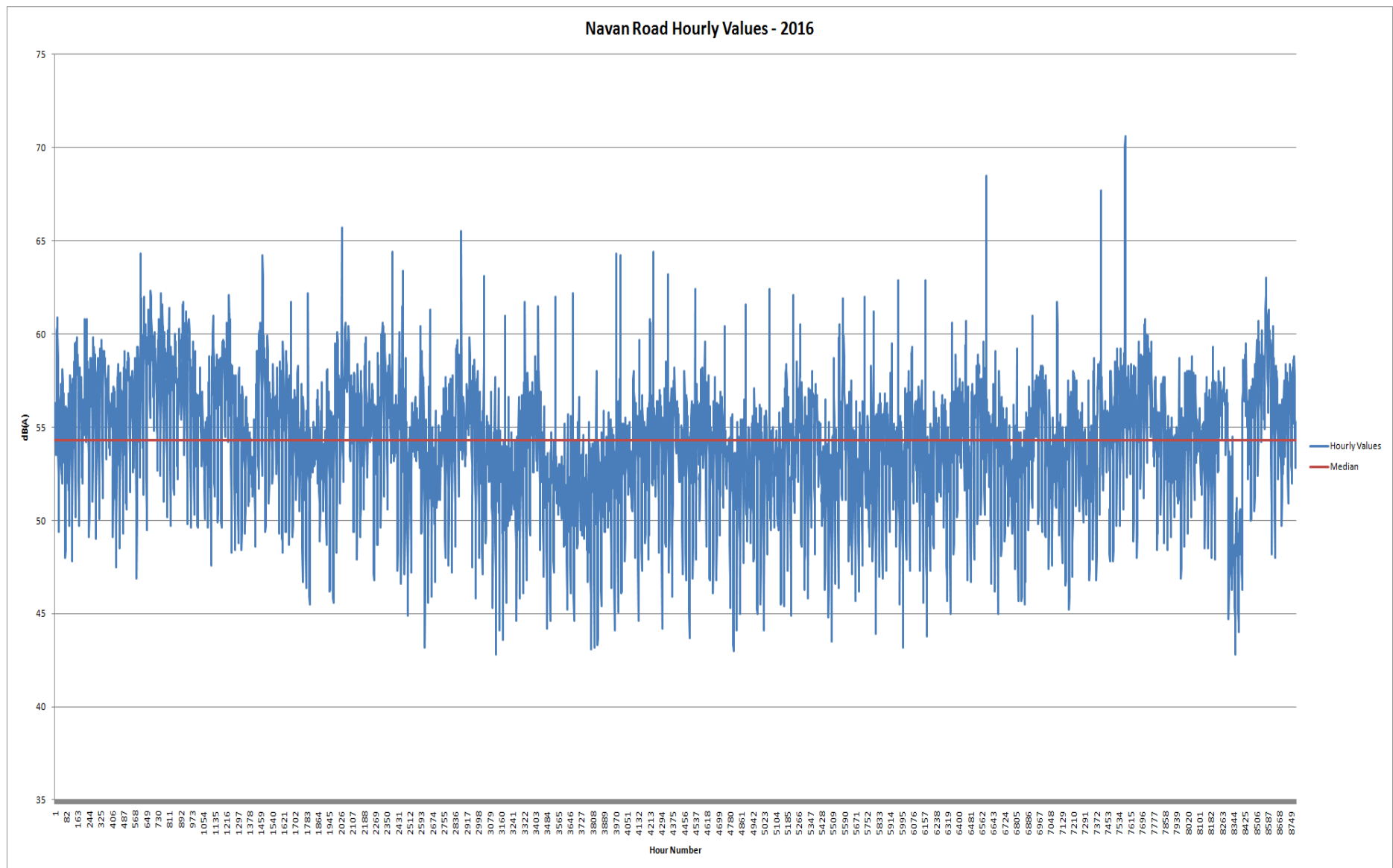


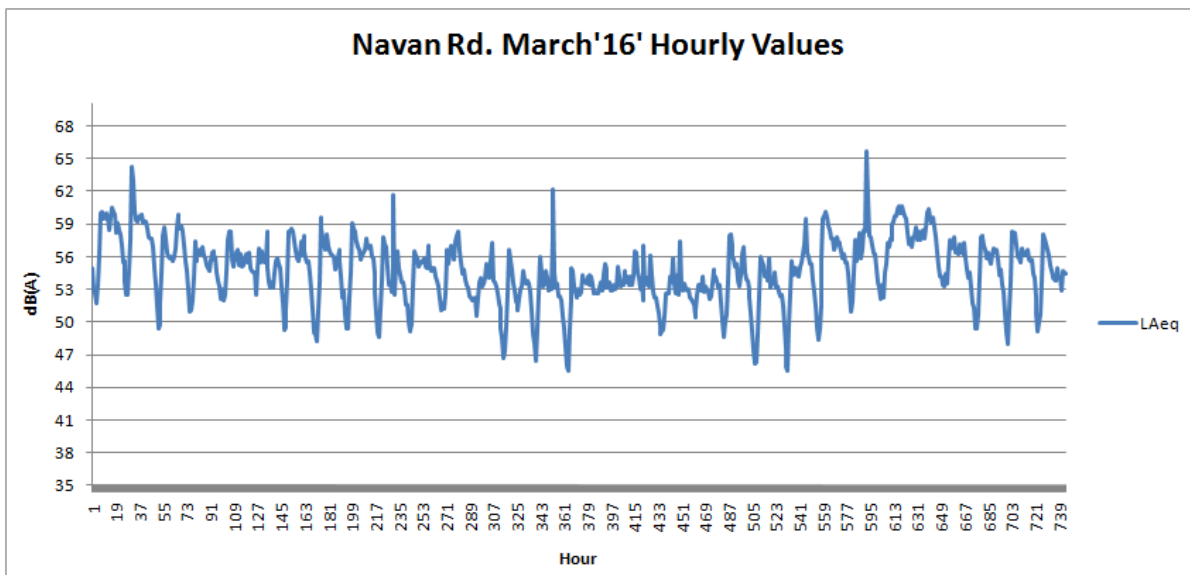
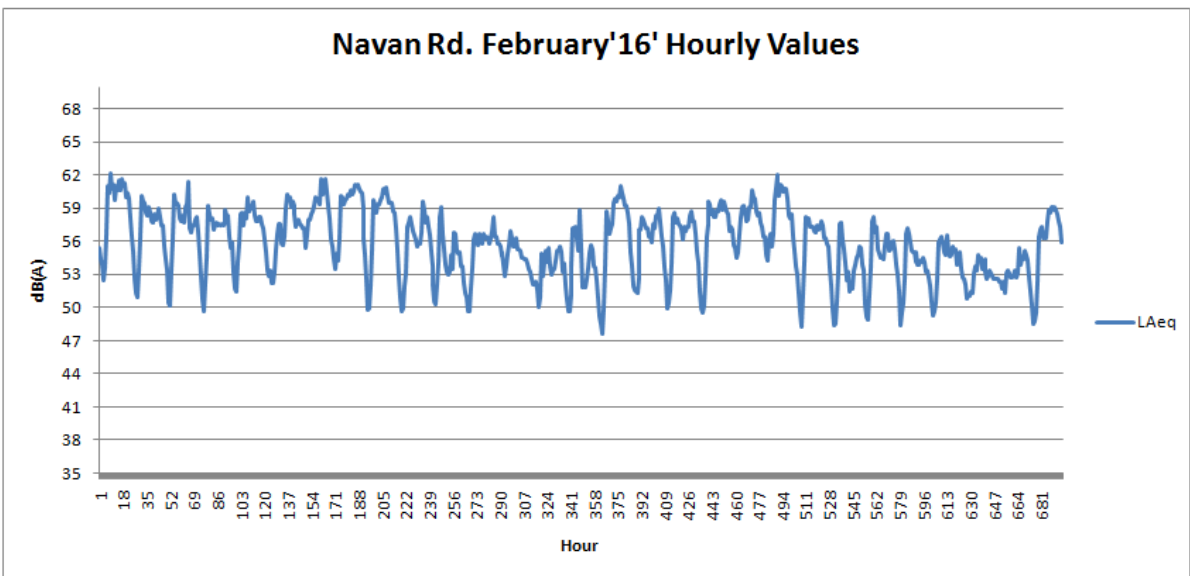
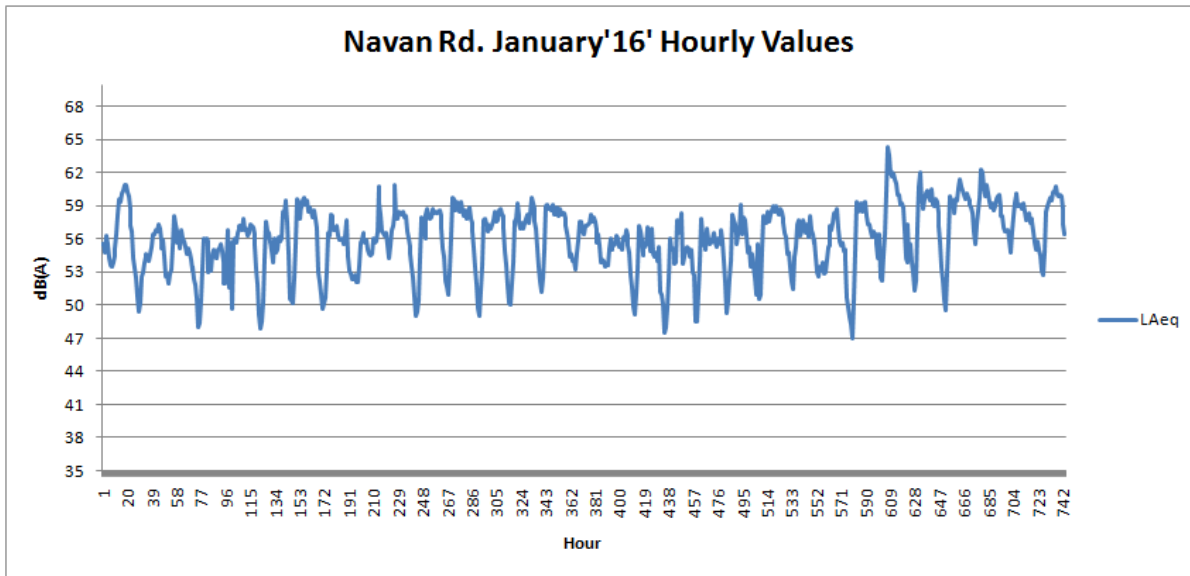
Chapelizod December.'16' Hourly Values

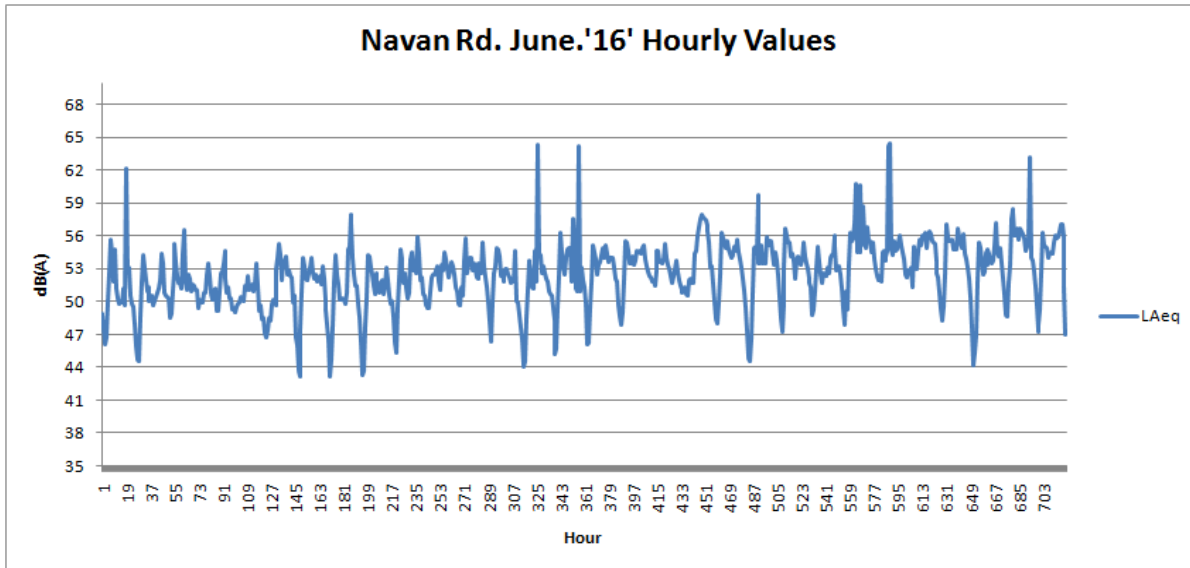
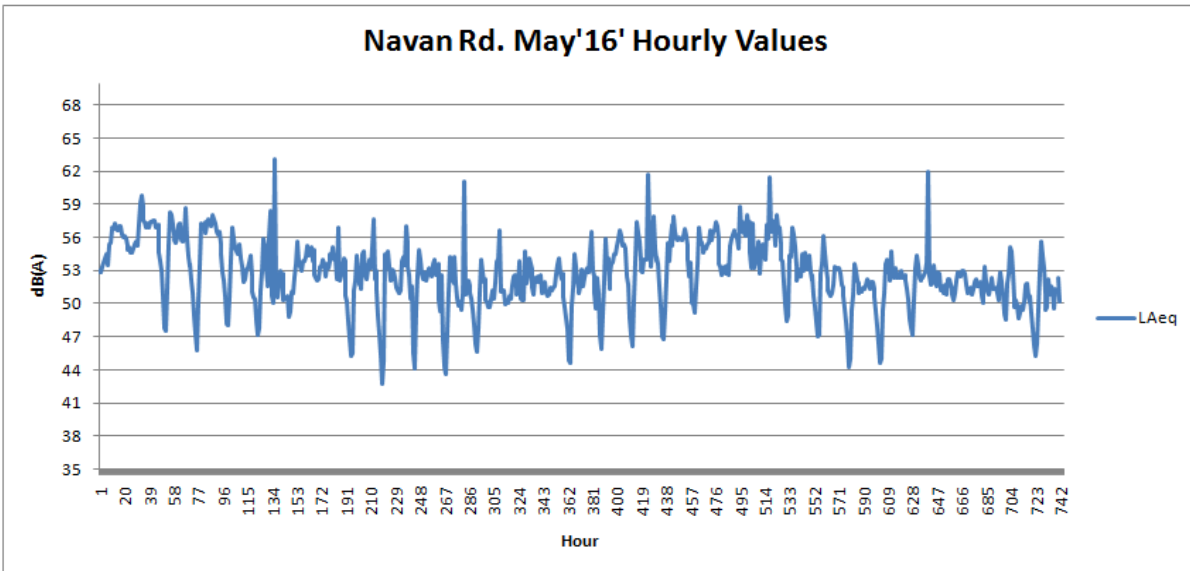
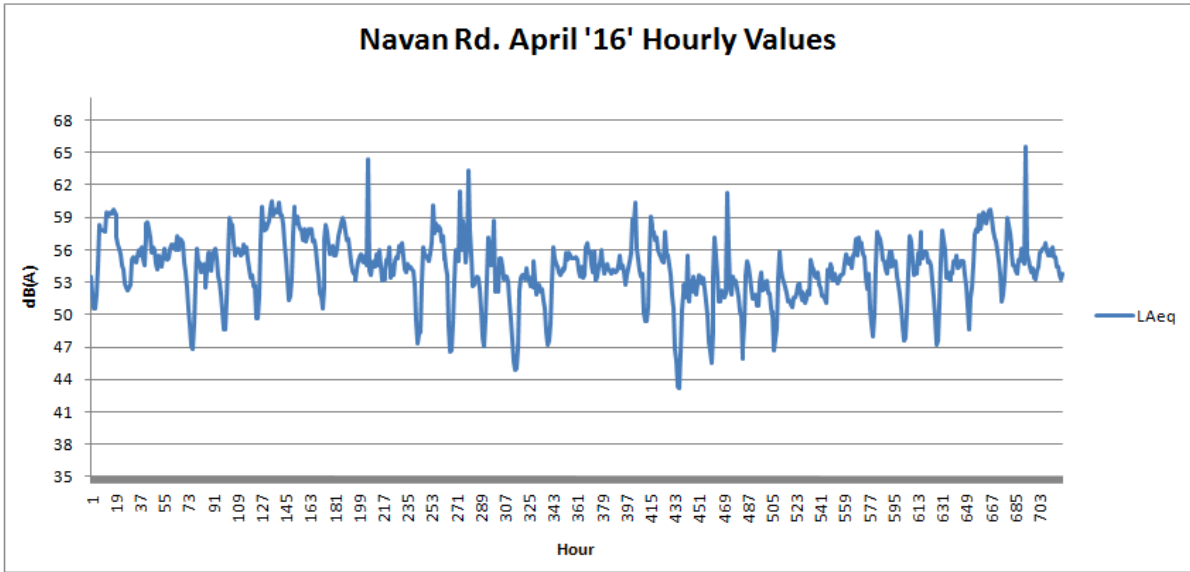


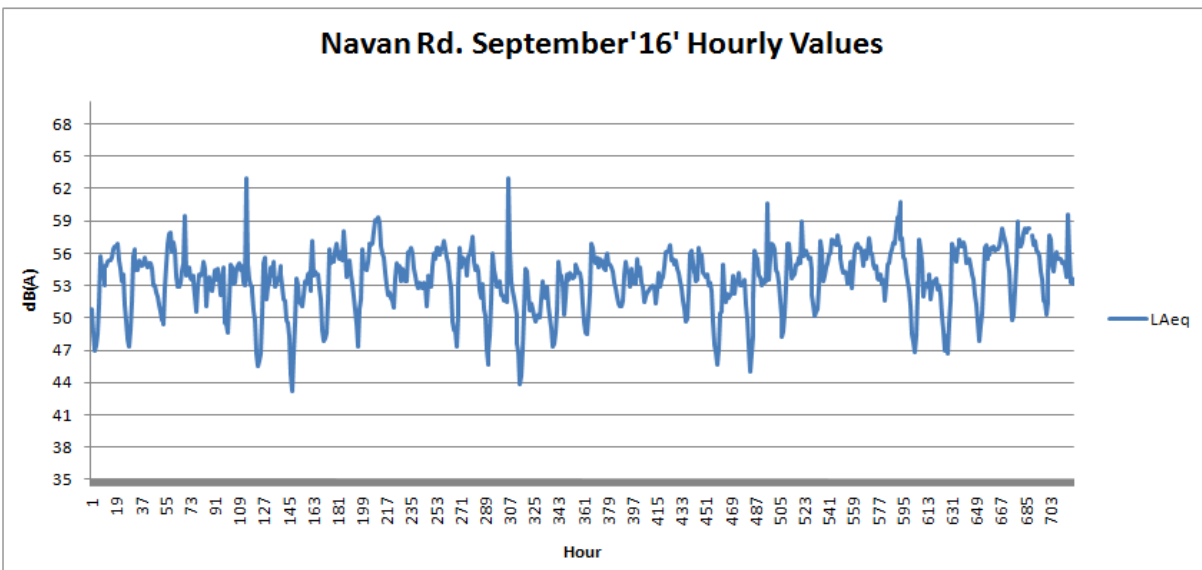
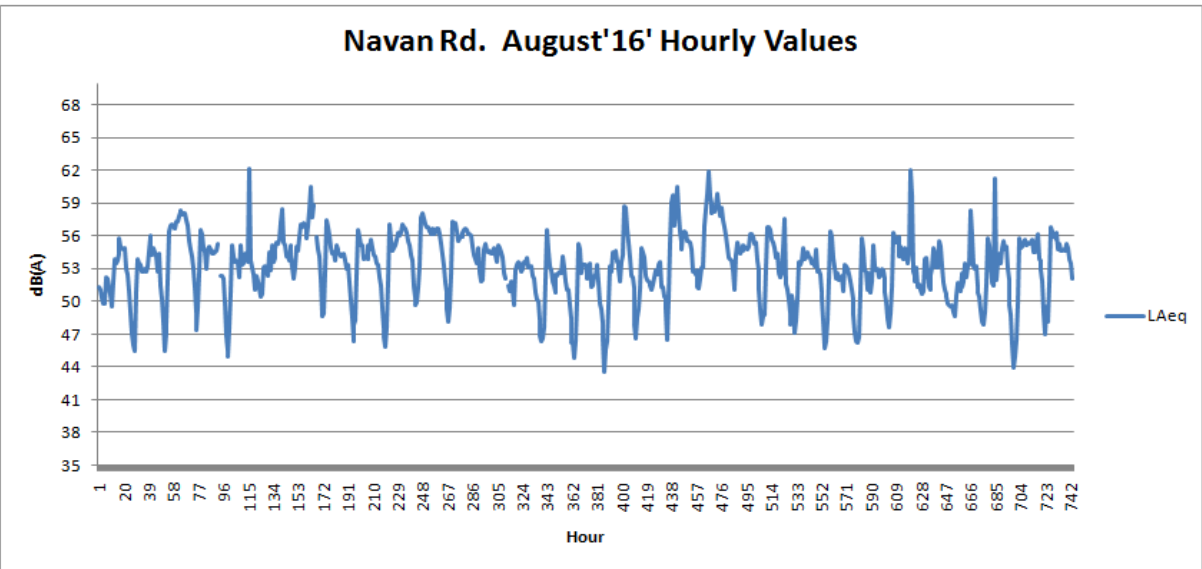
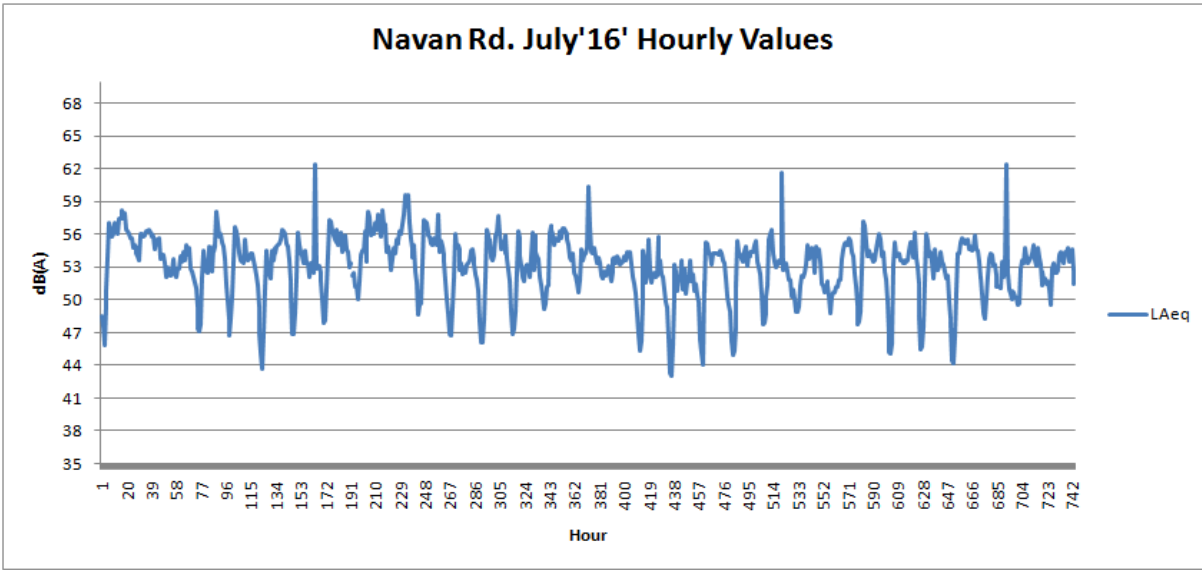
**ASHTOWN GROVE
NAVAN ROAD
DUBLIN 7**

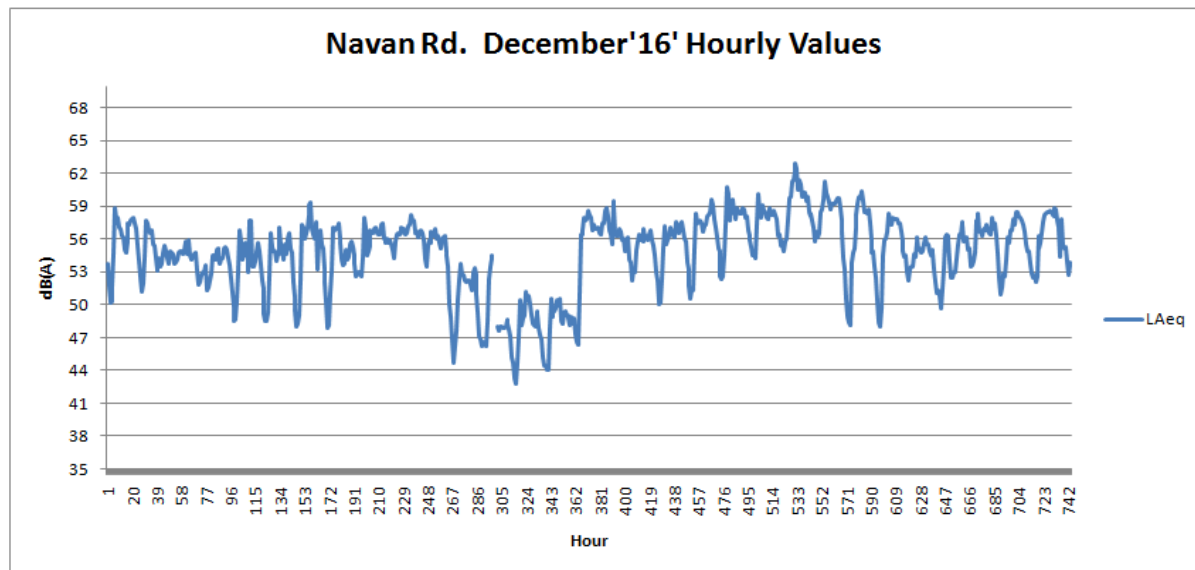
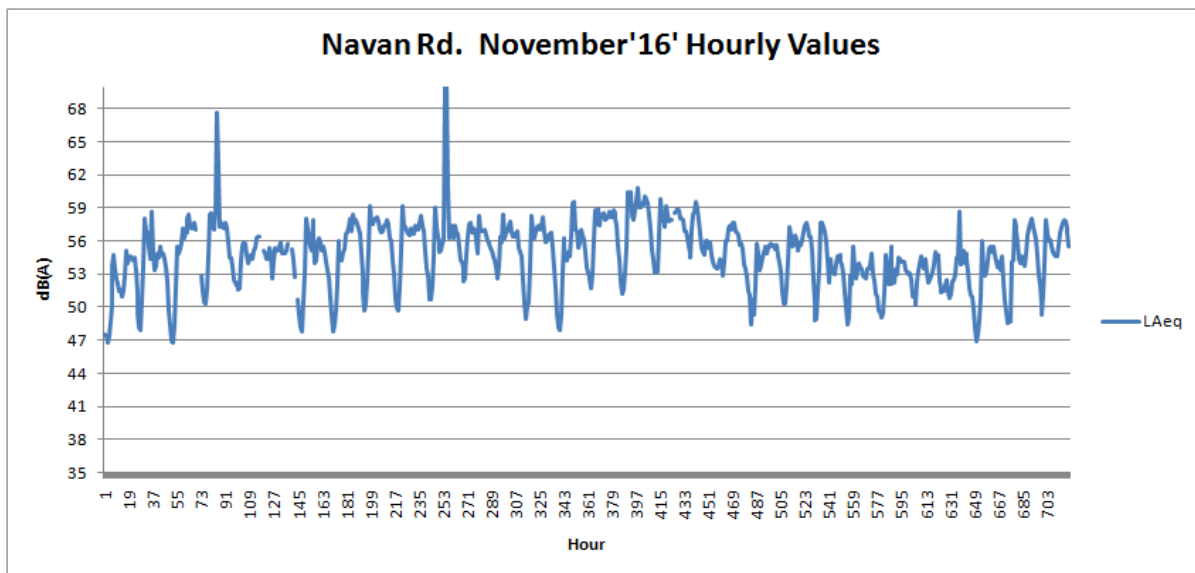
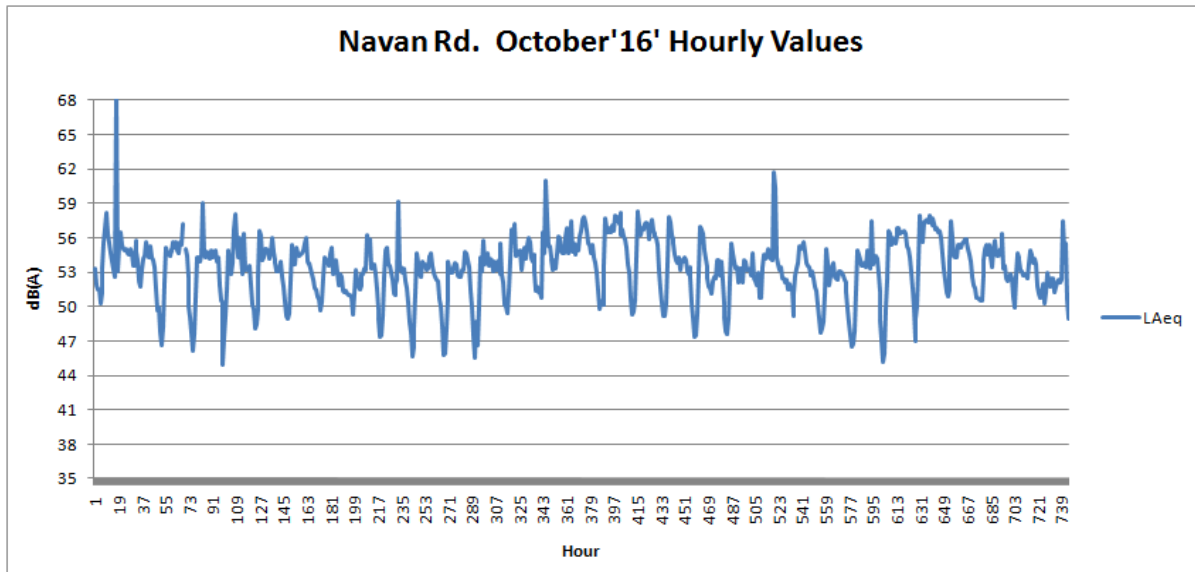




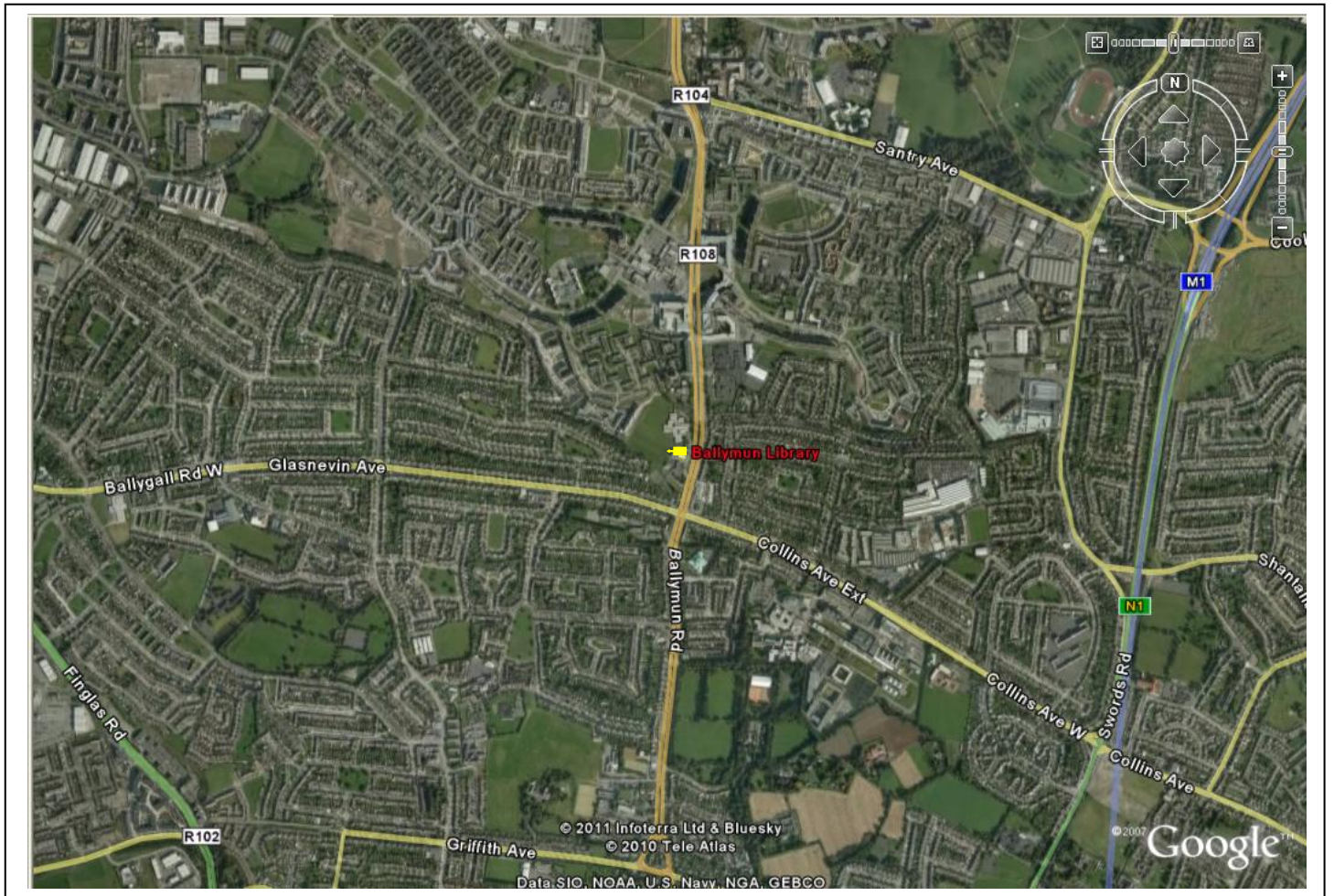


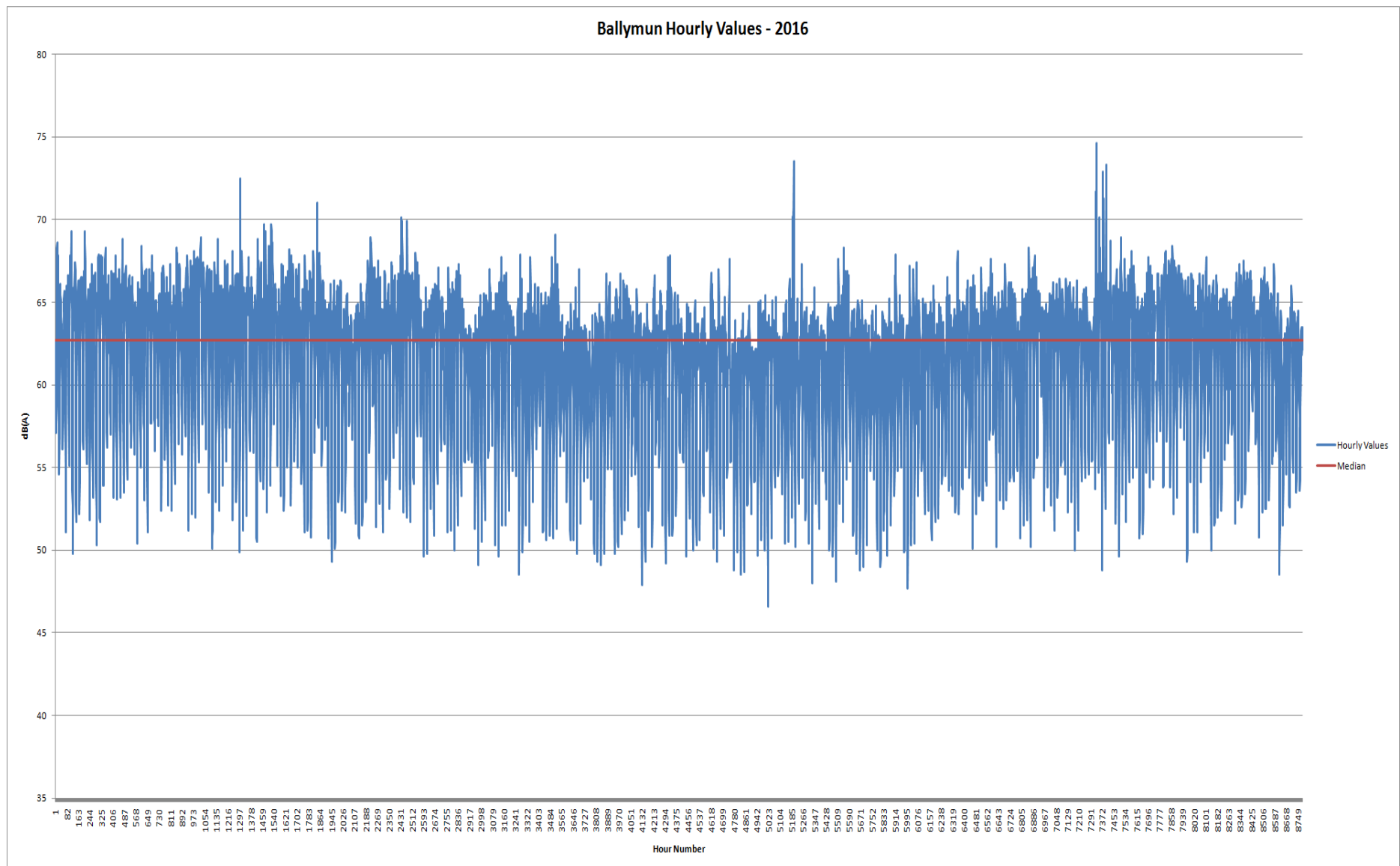


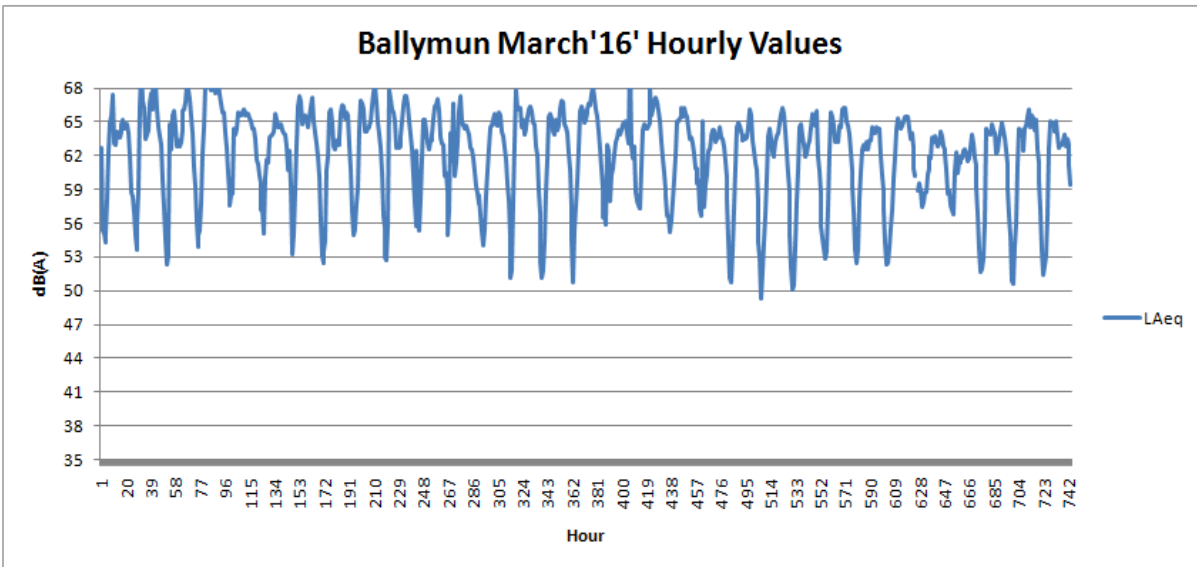
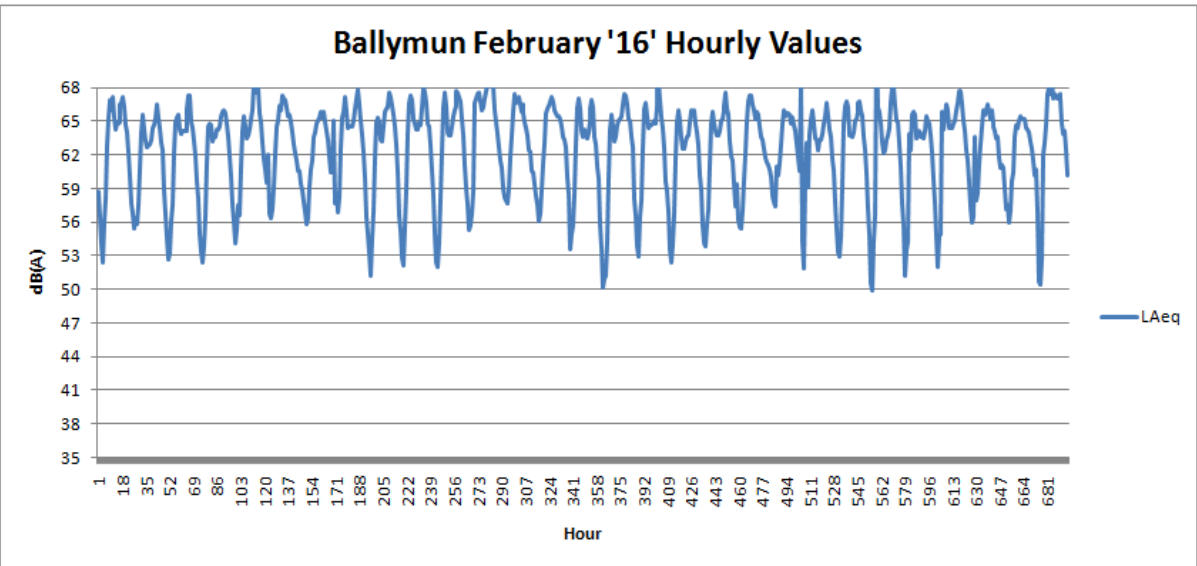
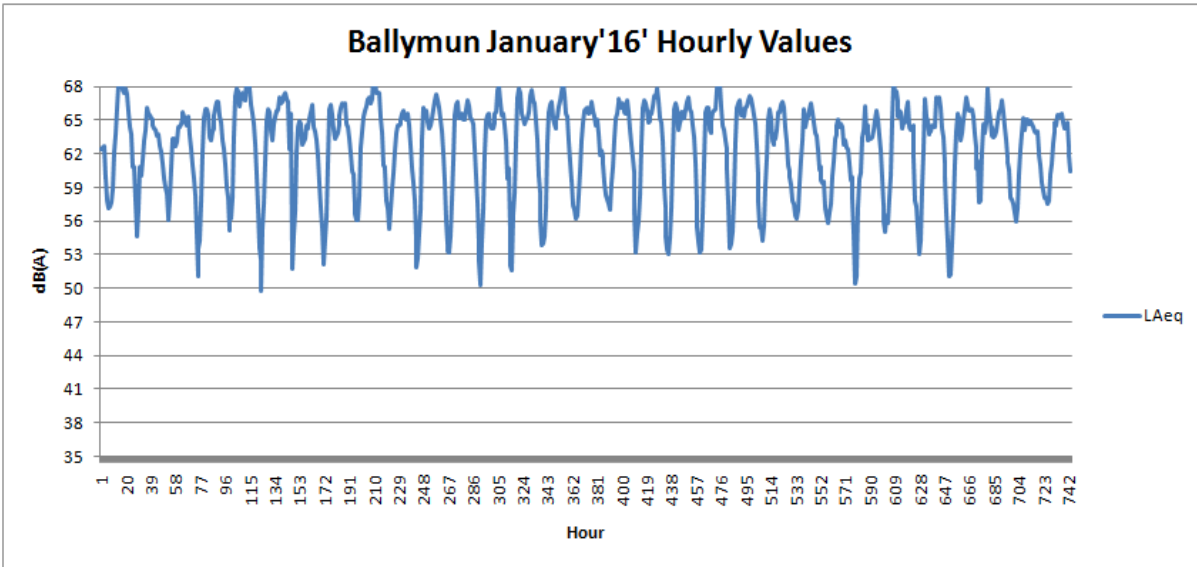


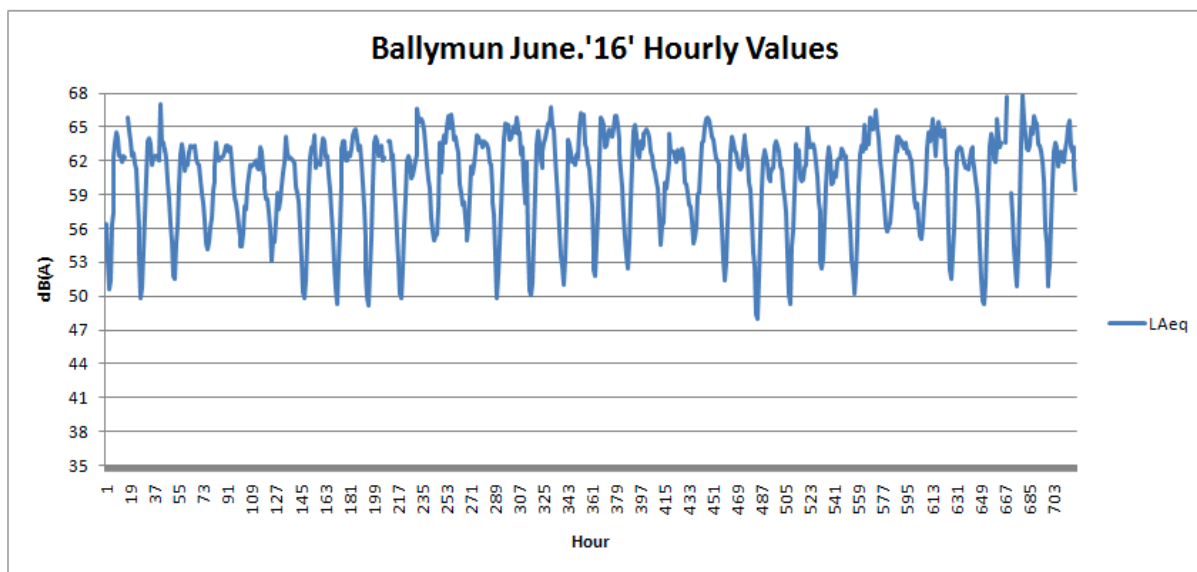
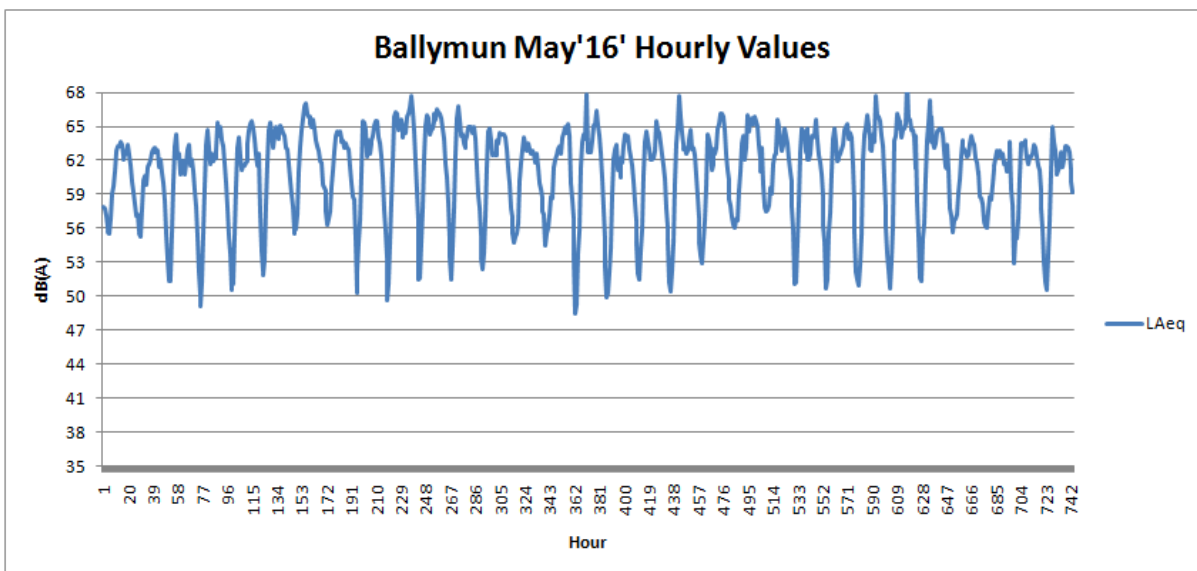
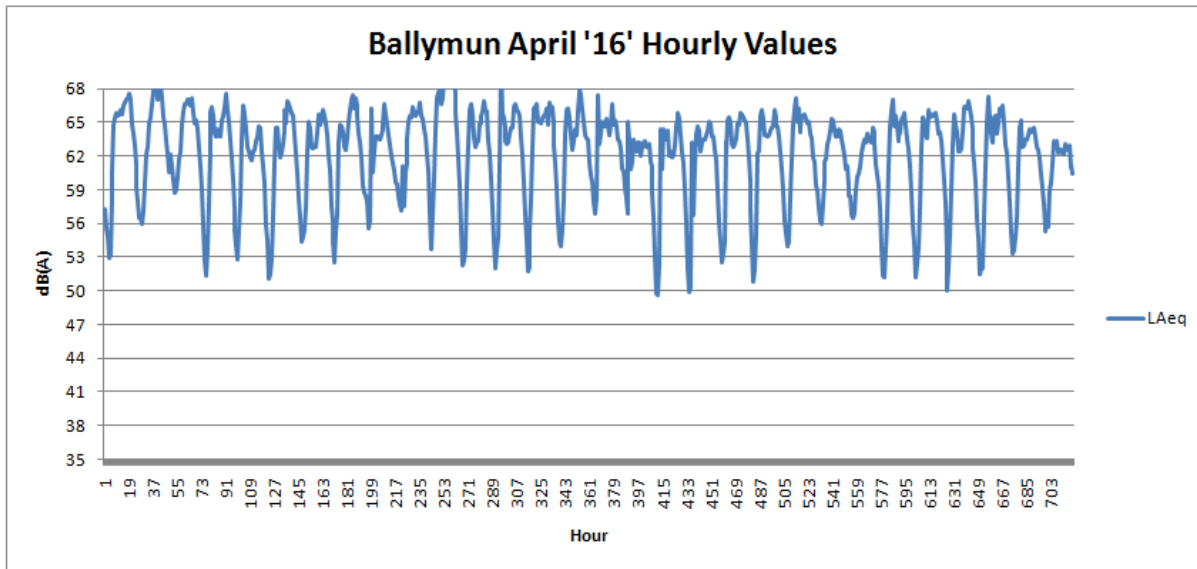


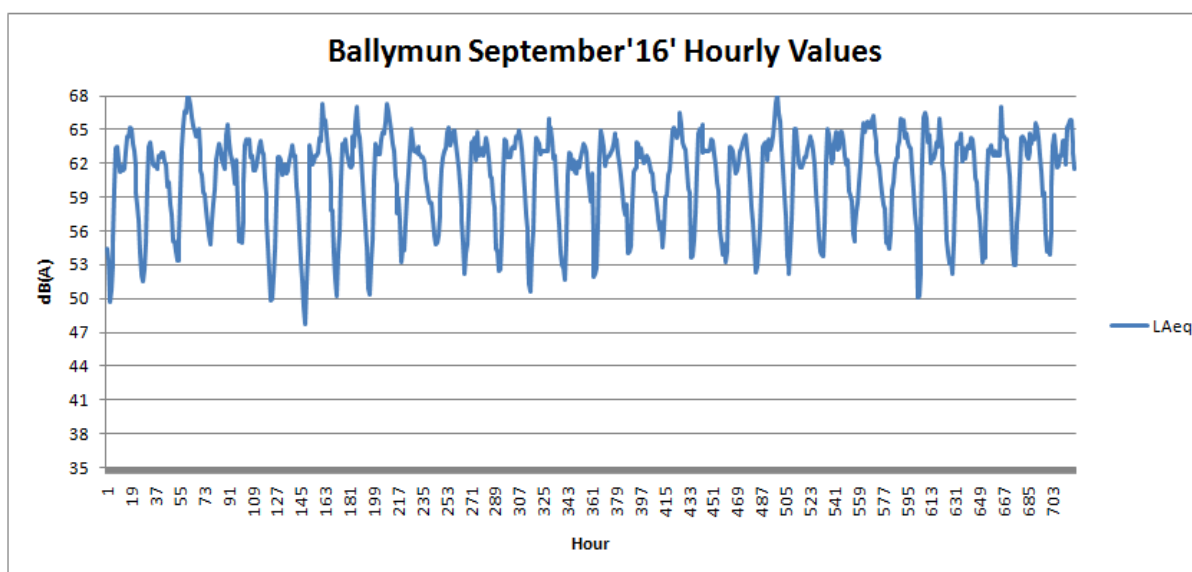
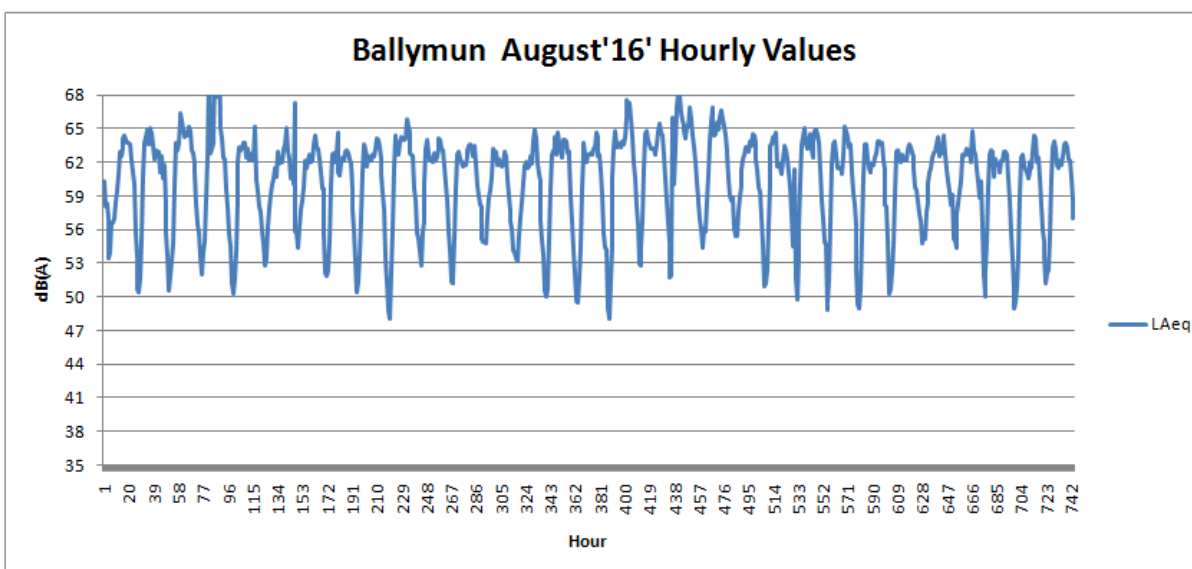
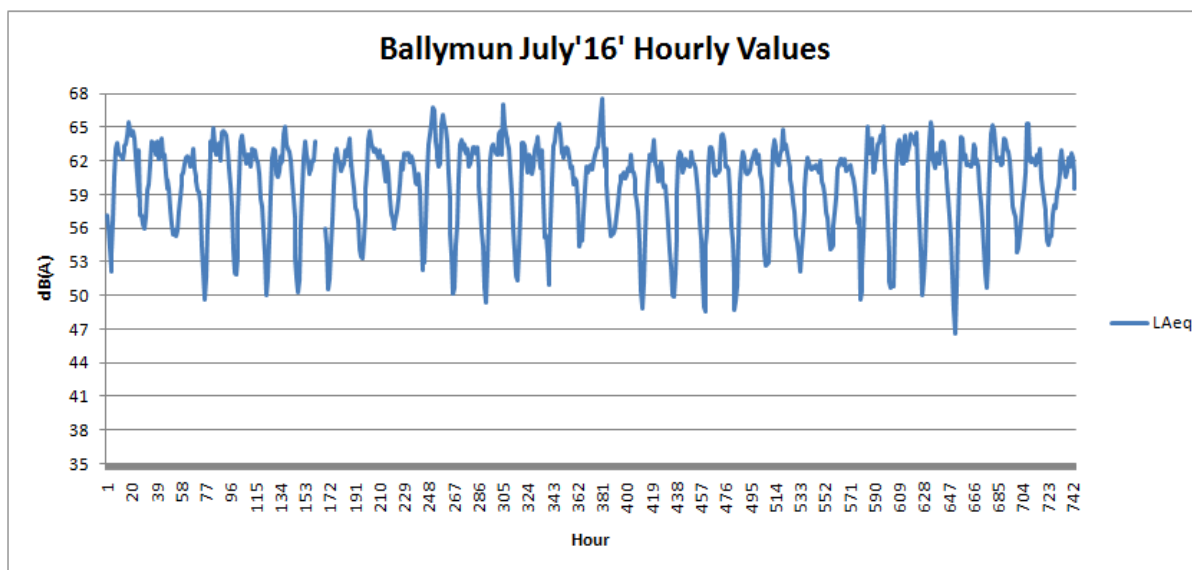
BALLYMUN LIBRARY
BALLYMUN ROAD
DUBLIN 11

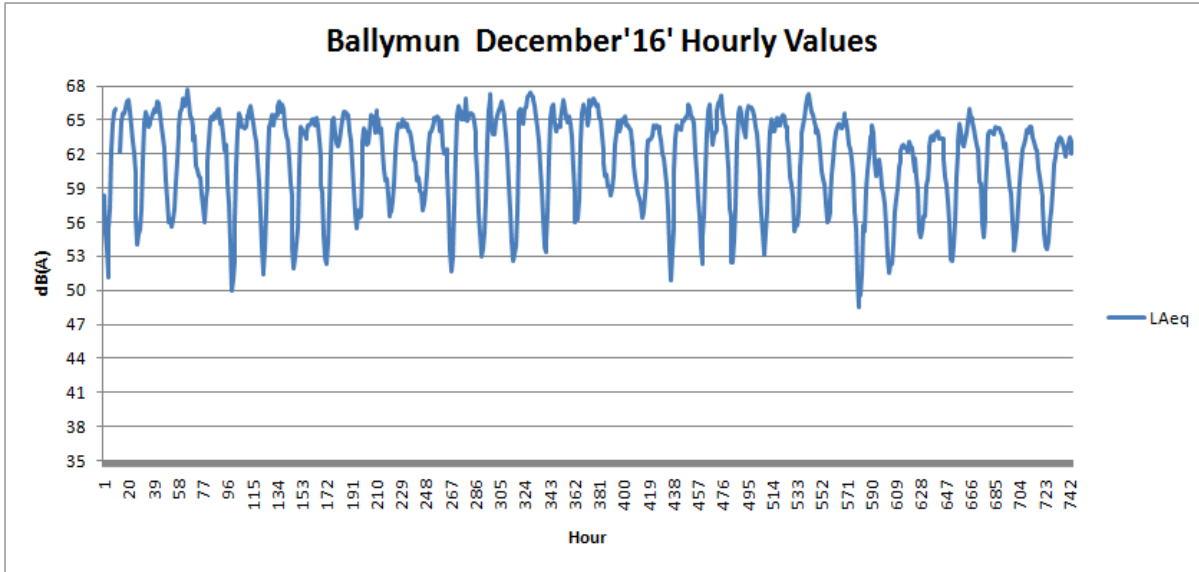
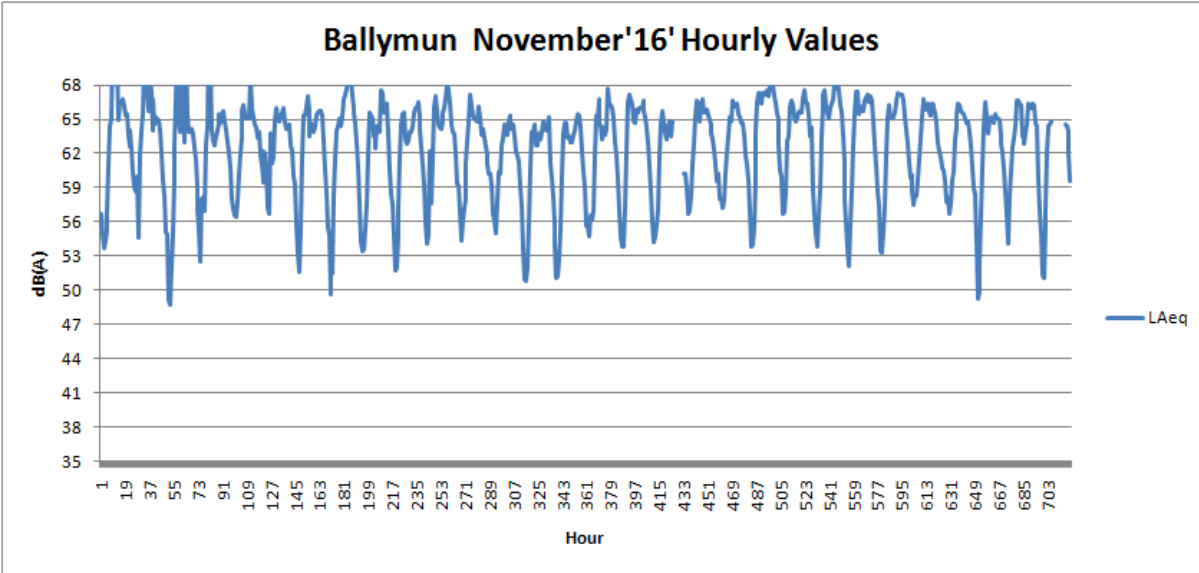
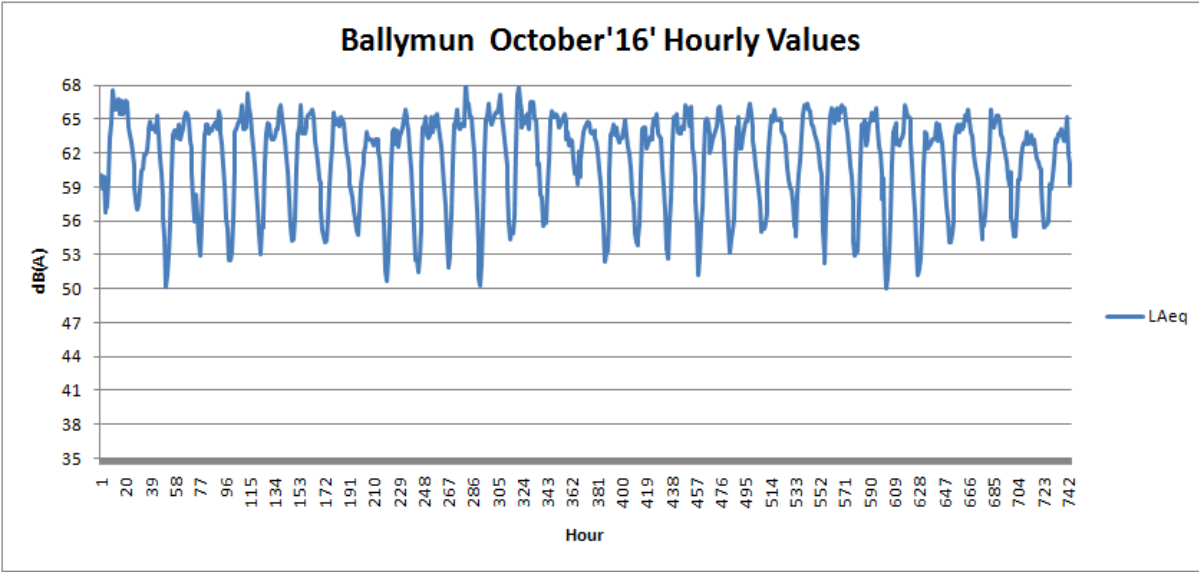






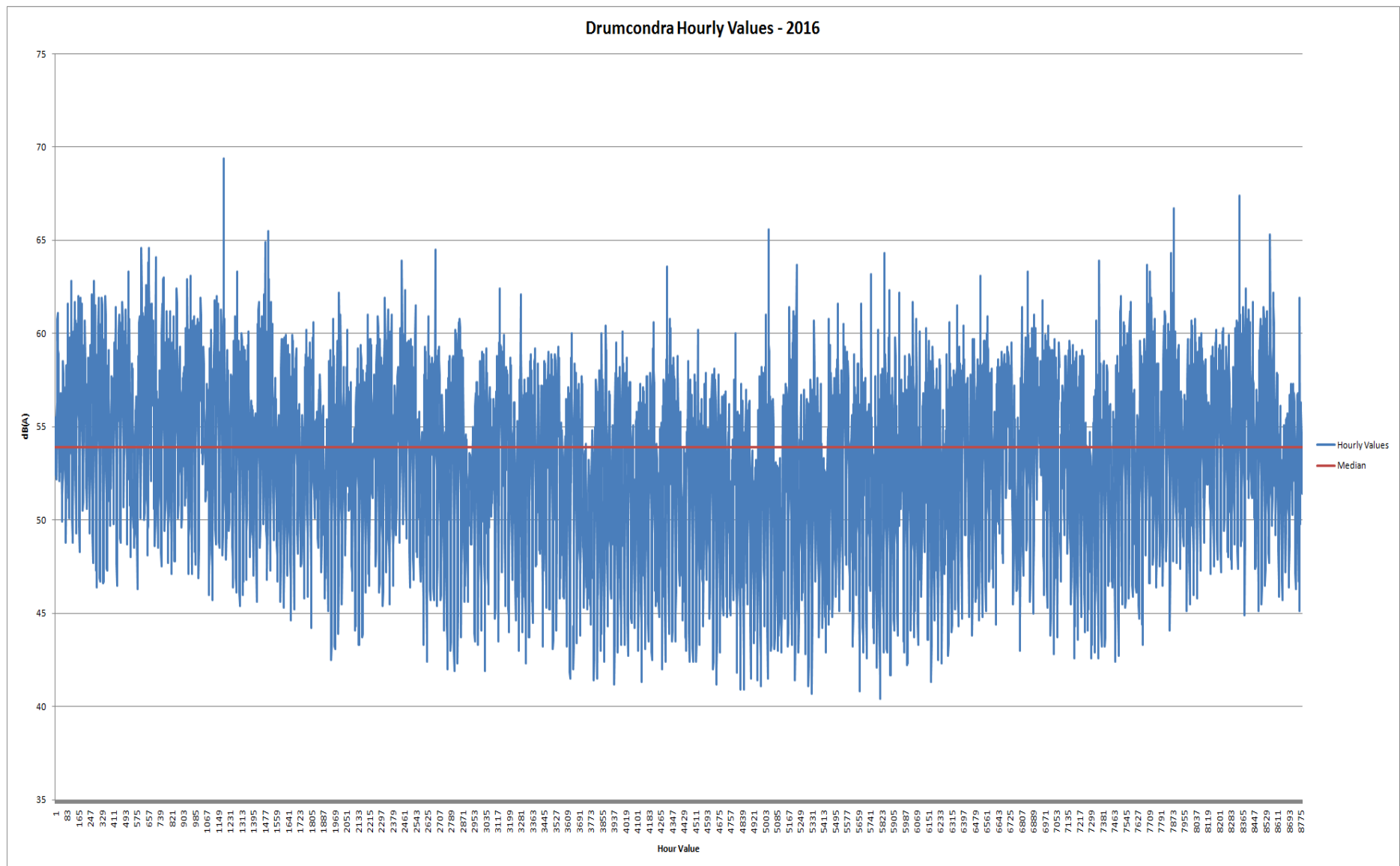


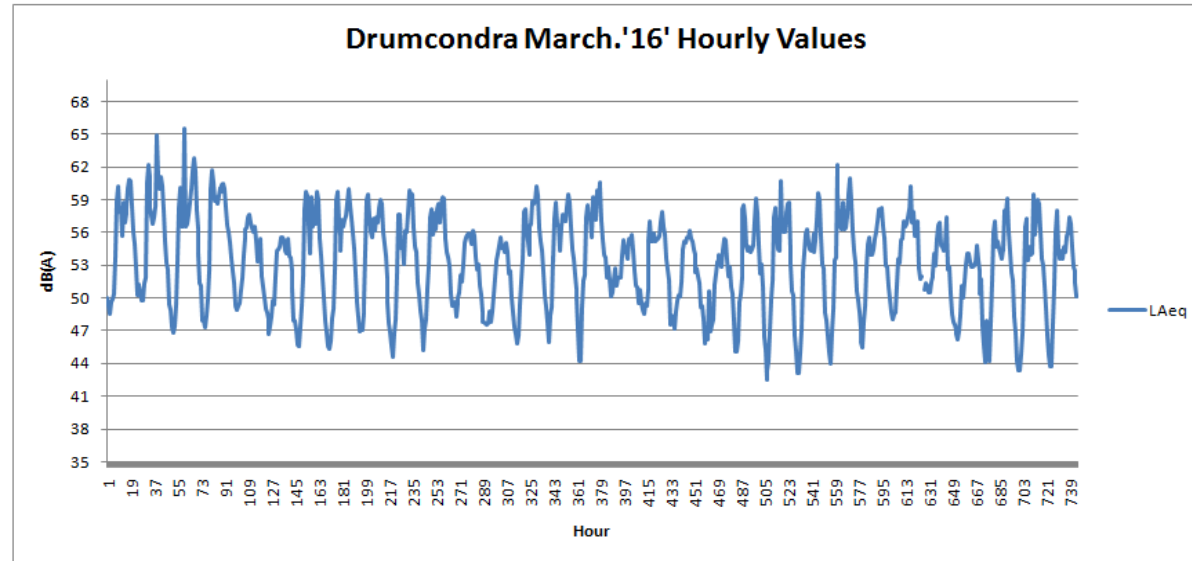
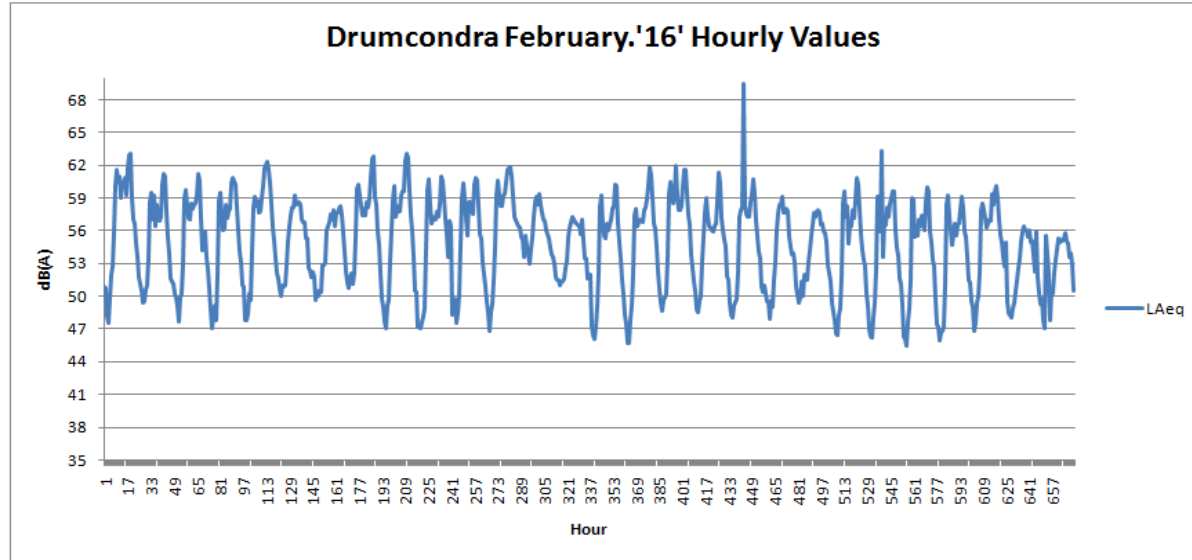
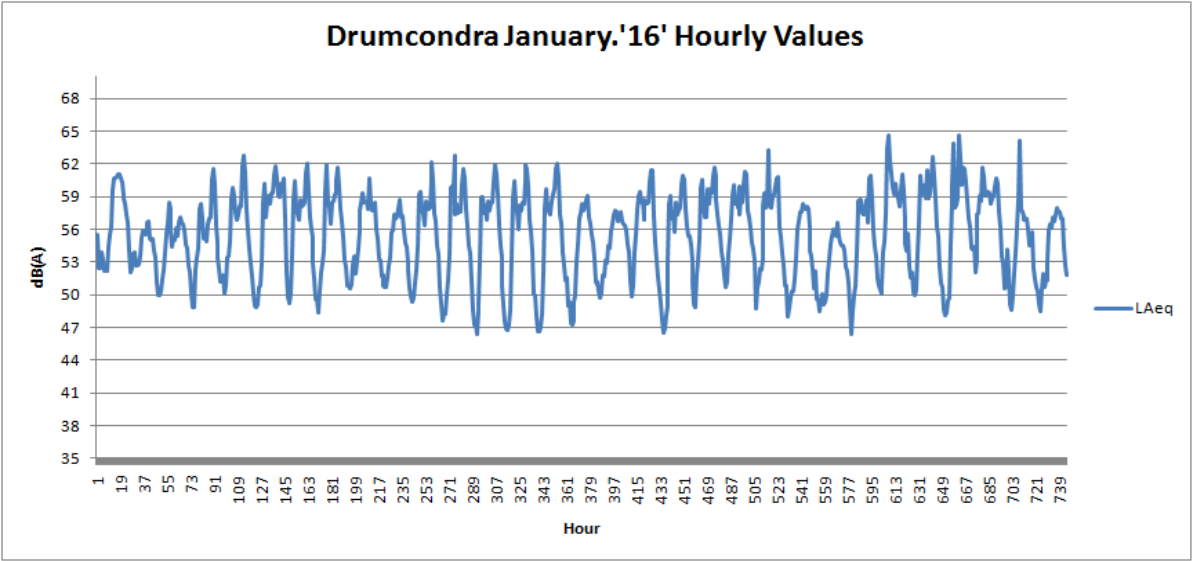


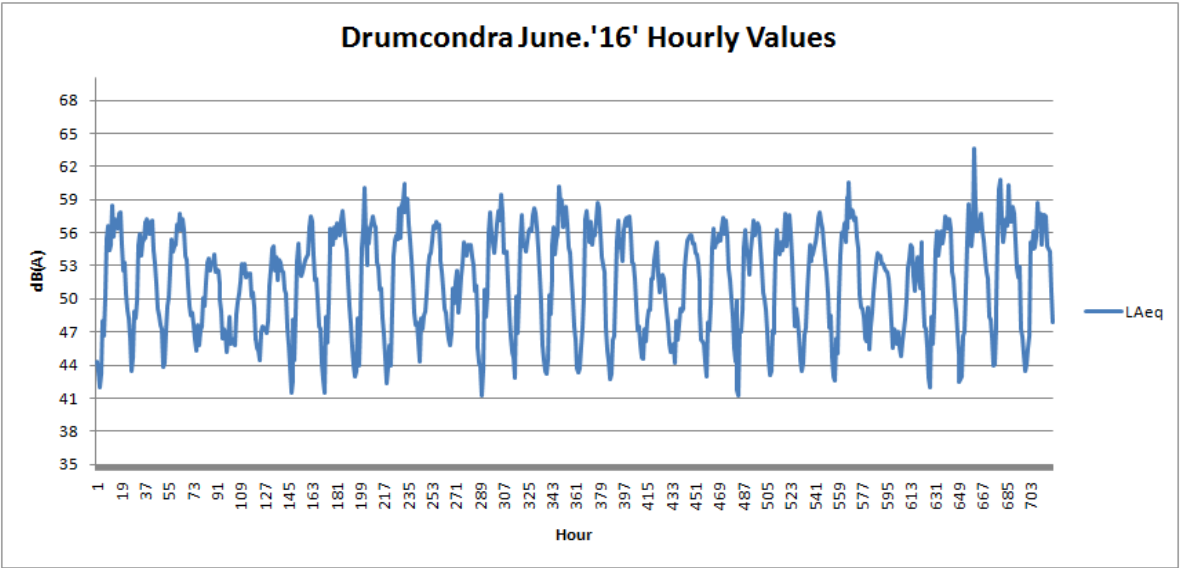
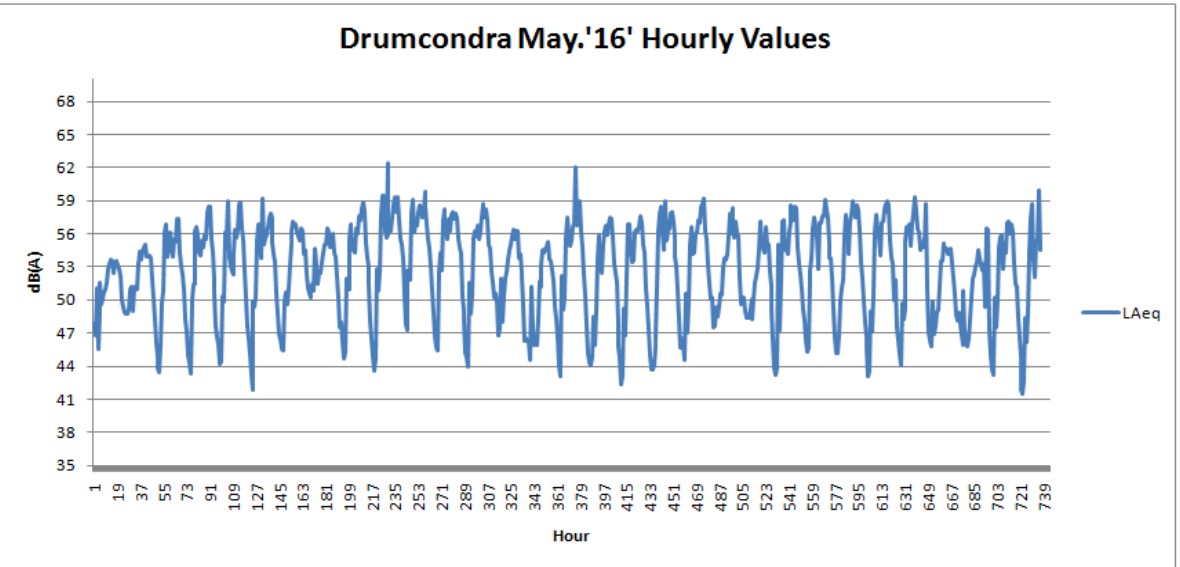
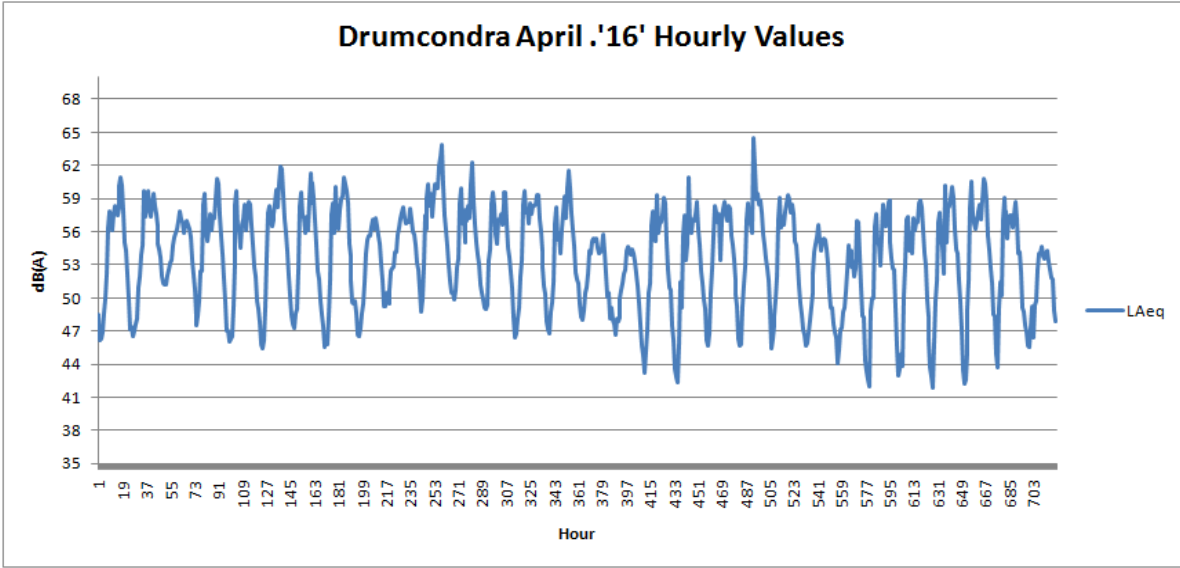


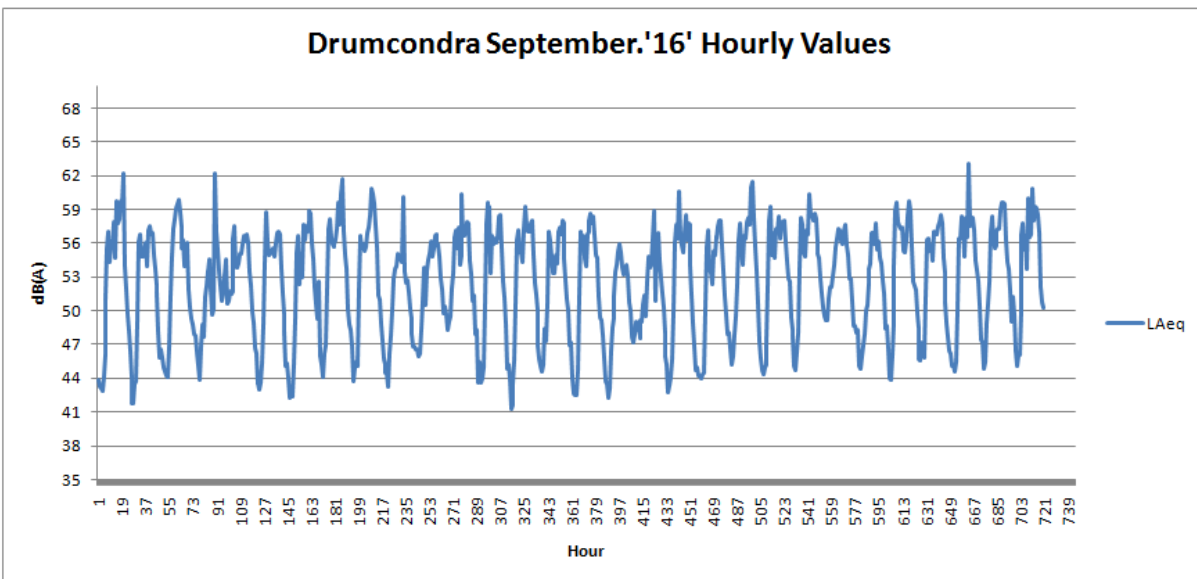
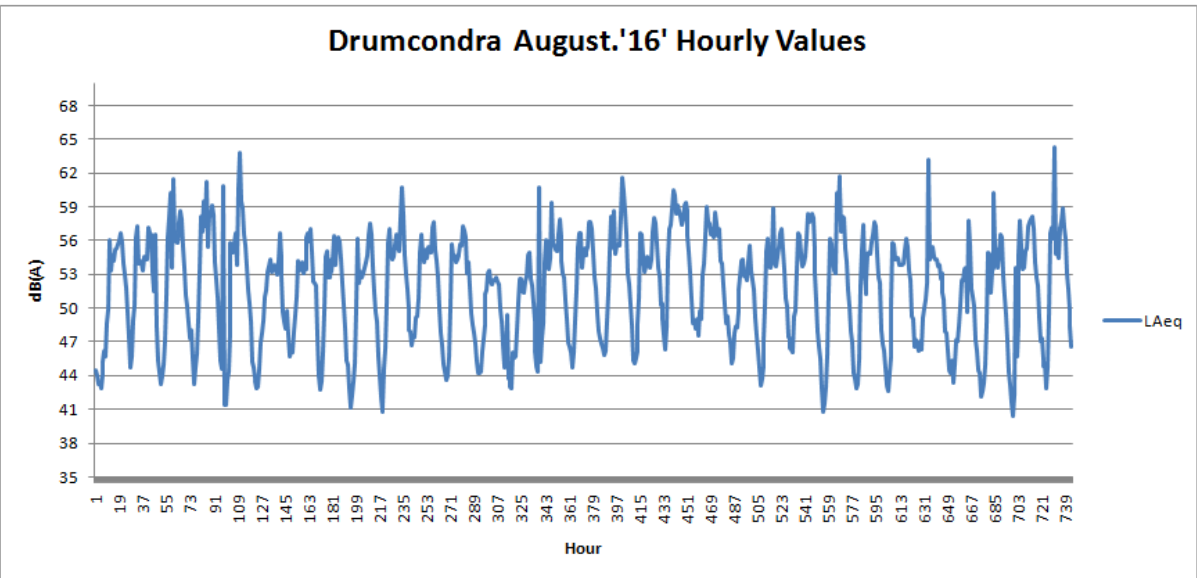
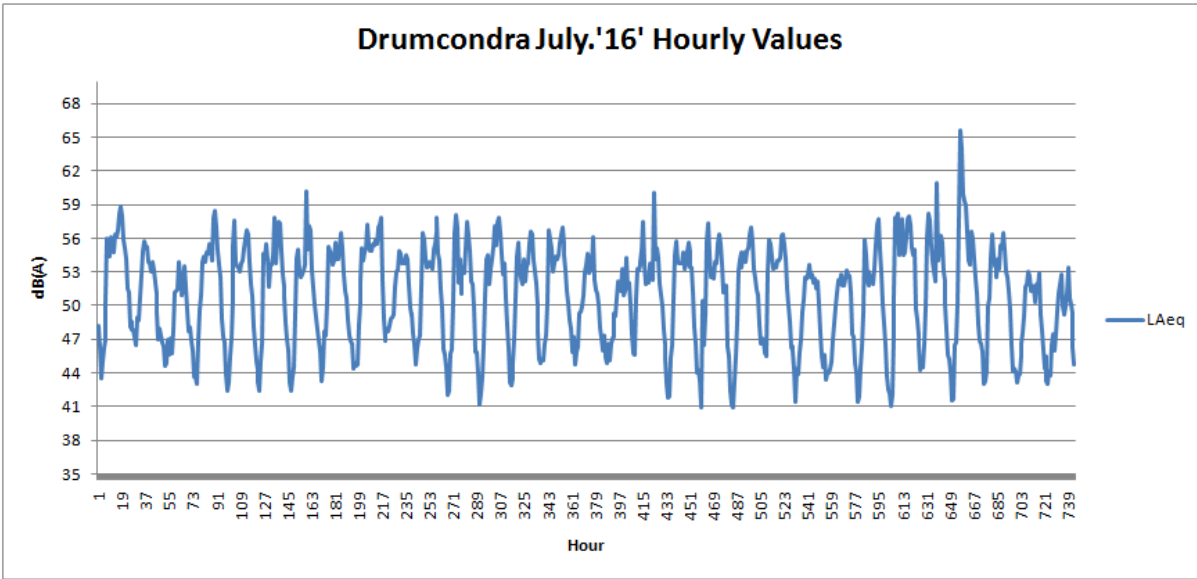
DRUMCONDRA LIBRARY
MILLMOUNT AVENUE
DUBLIN 9

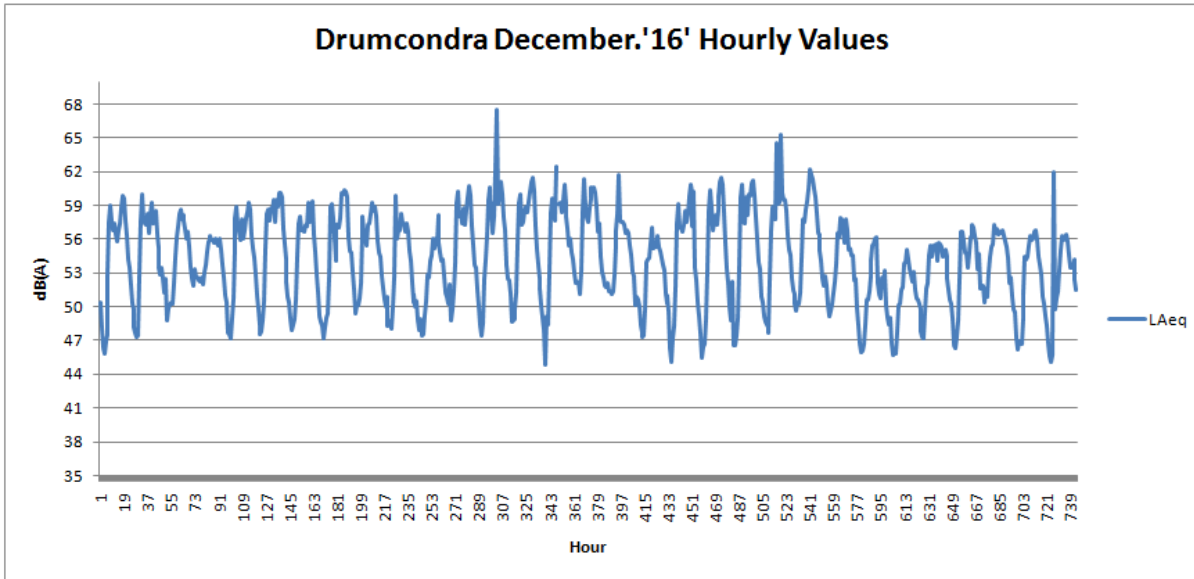
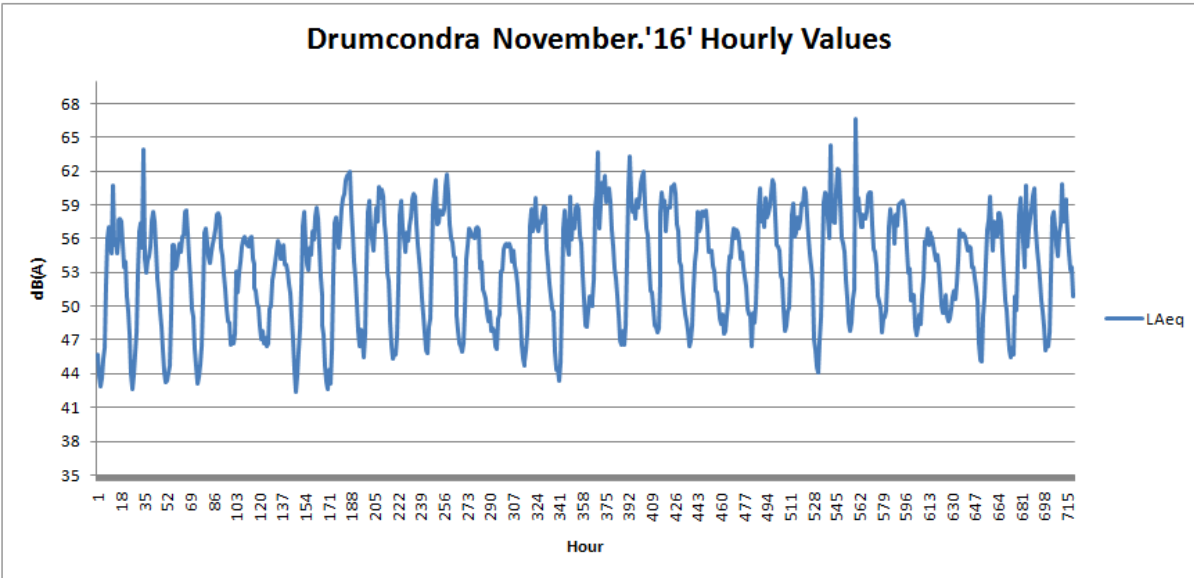
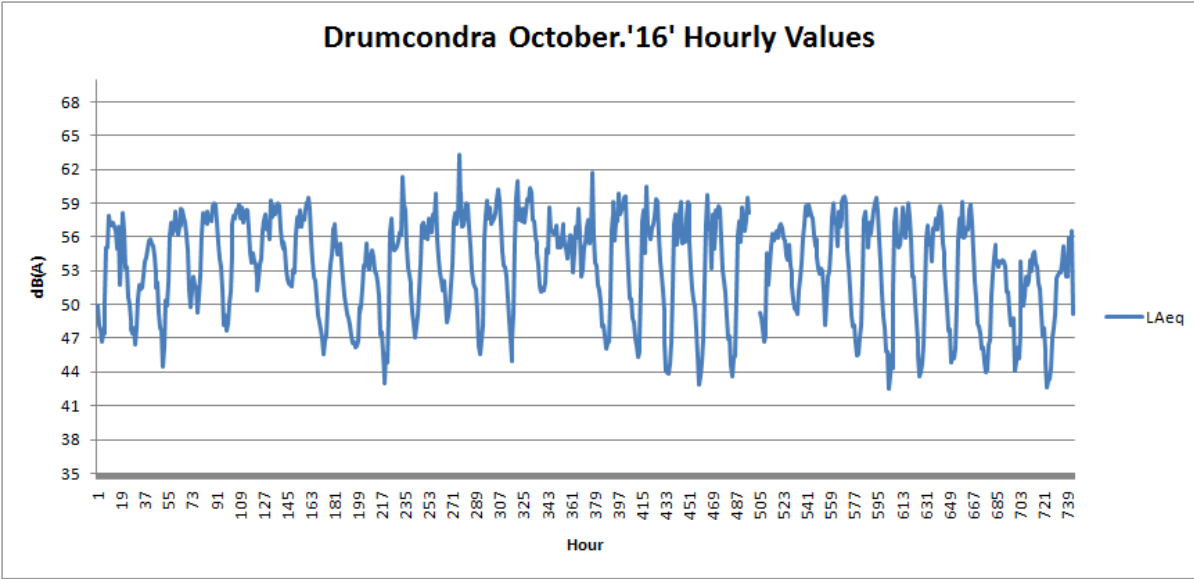






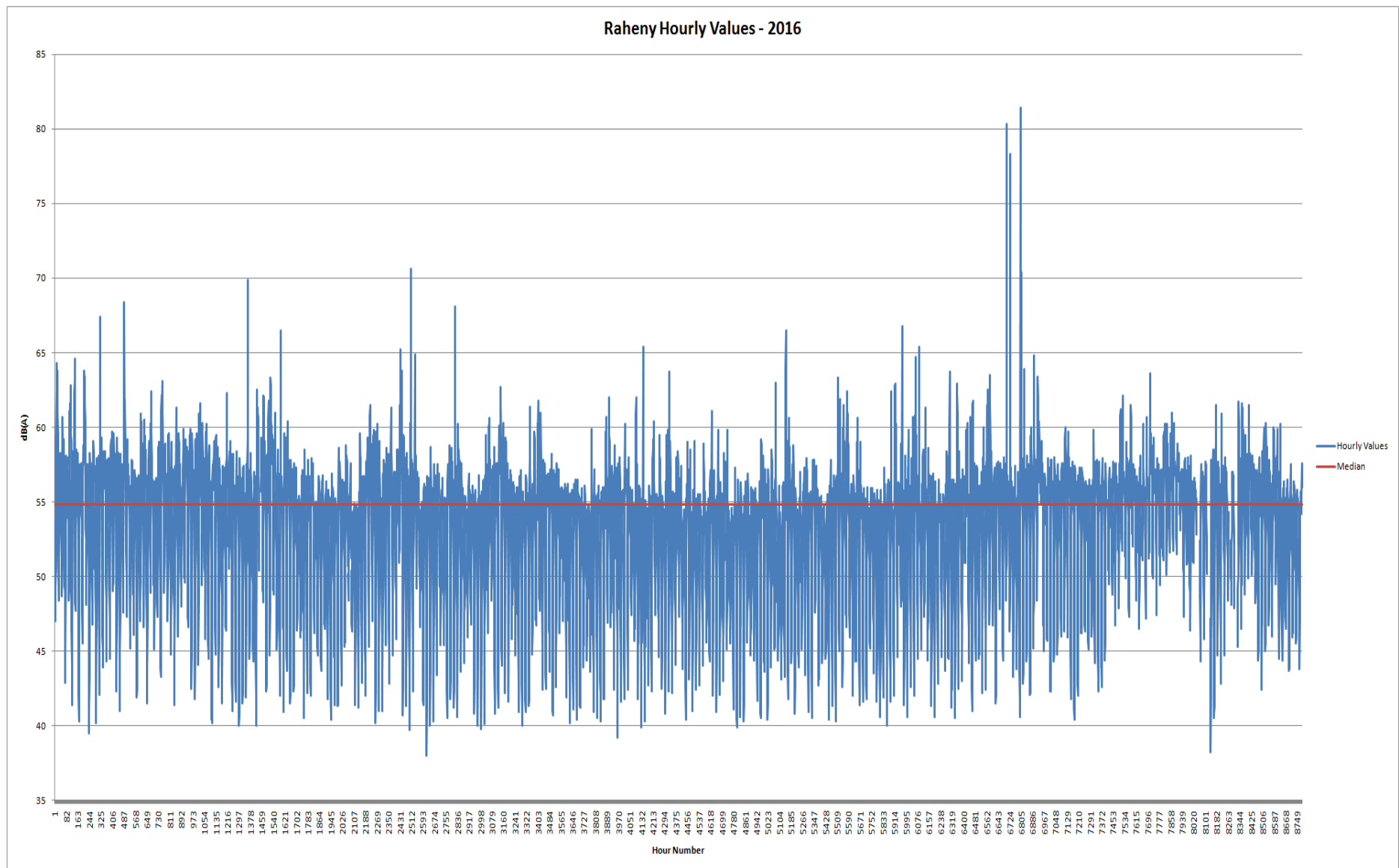


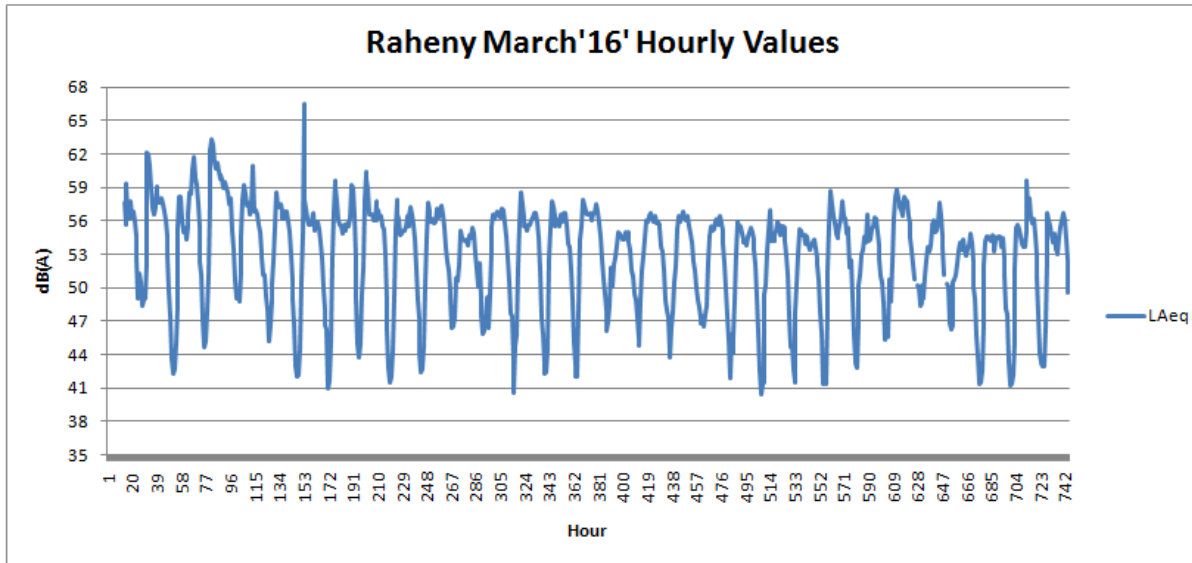
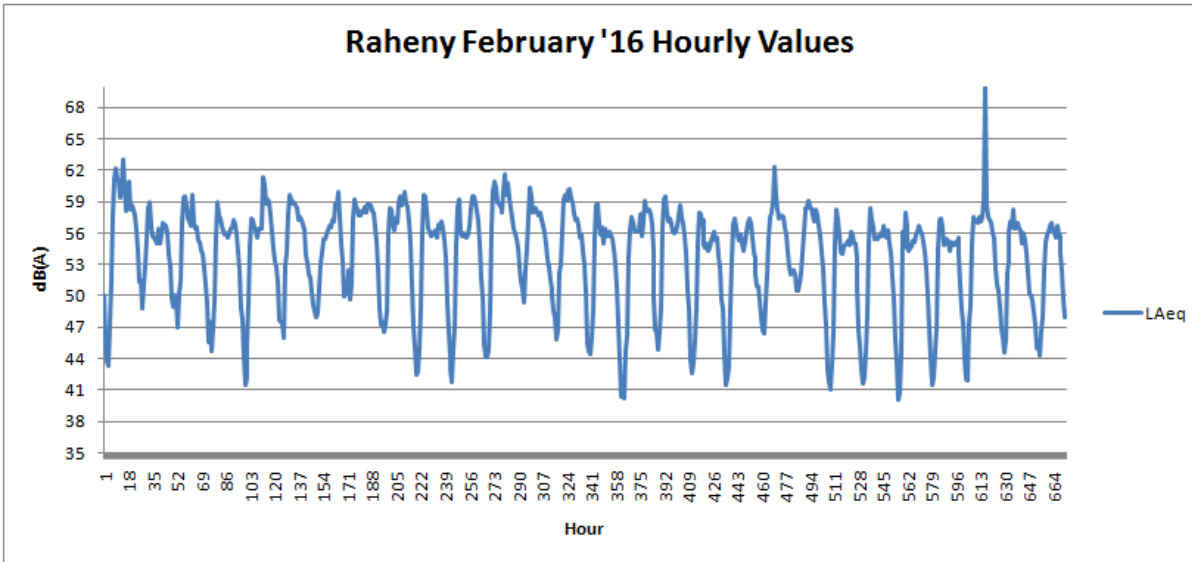
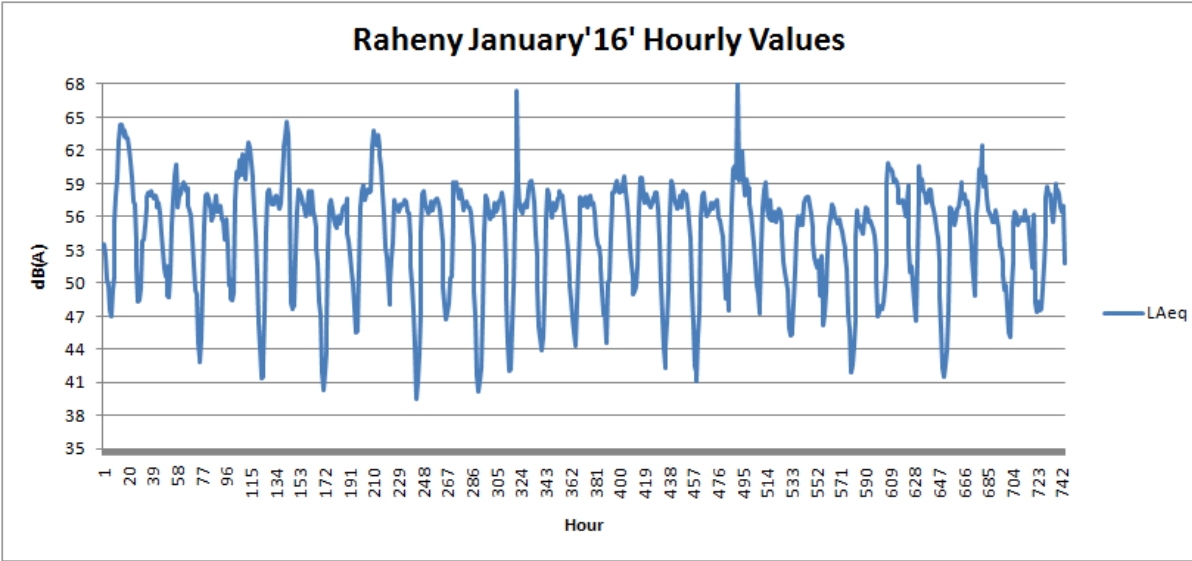


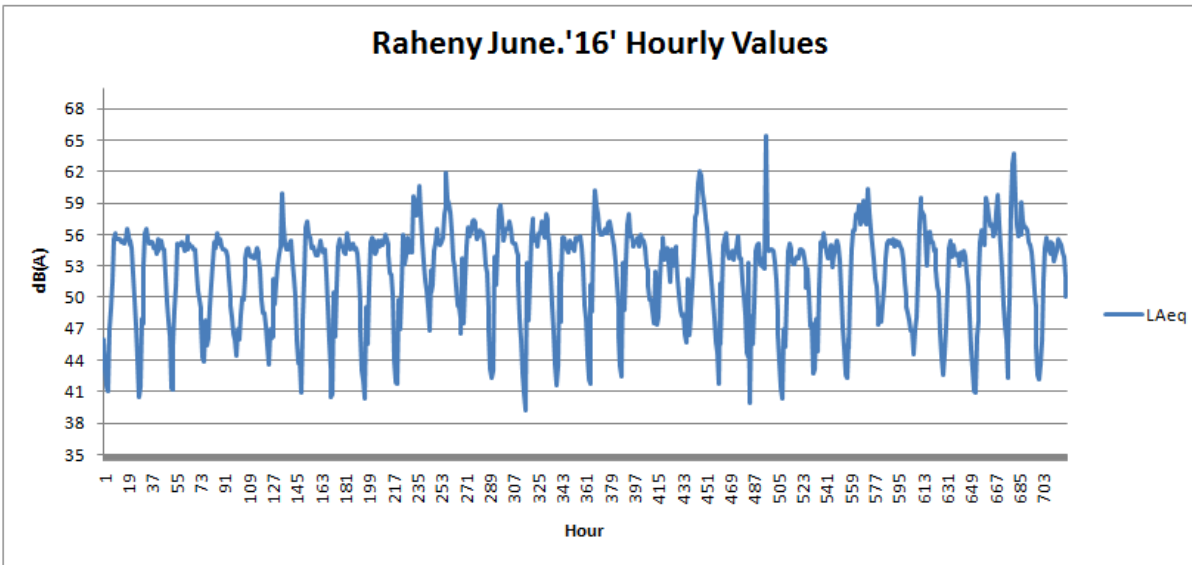
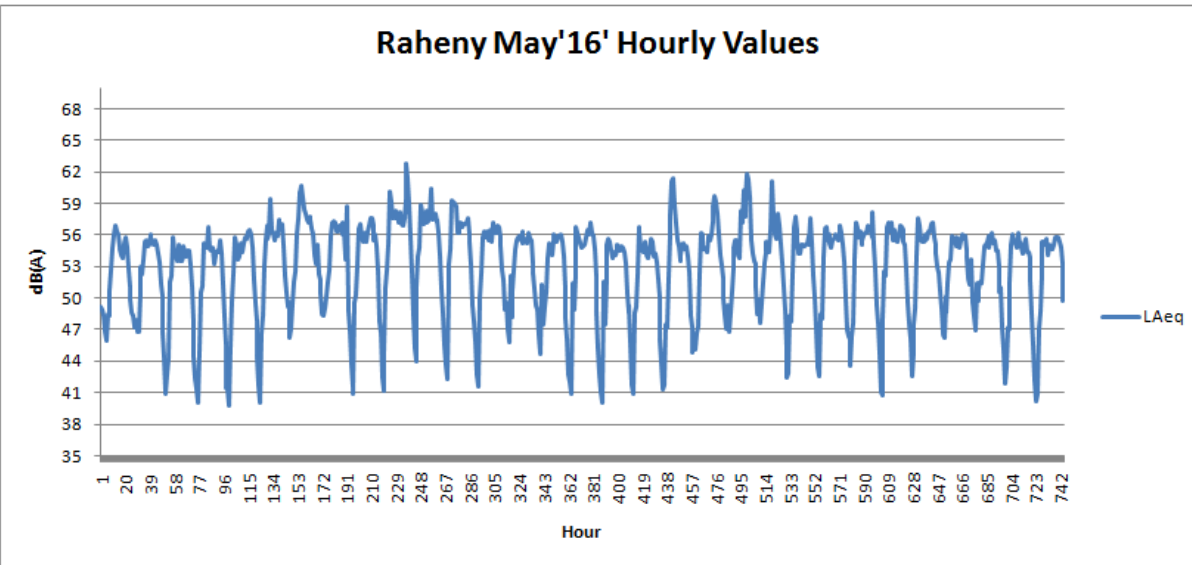
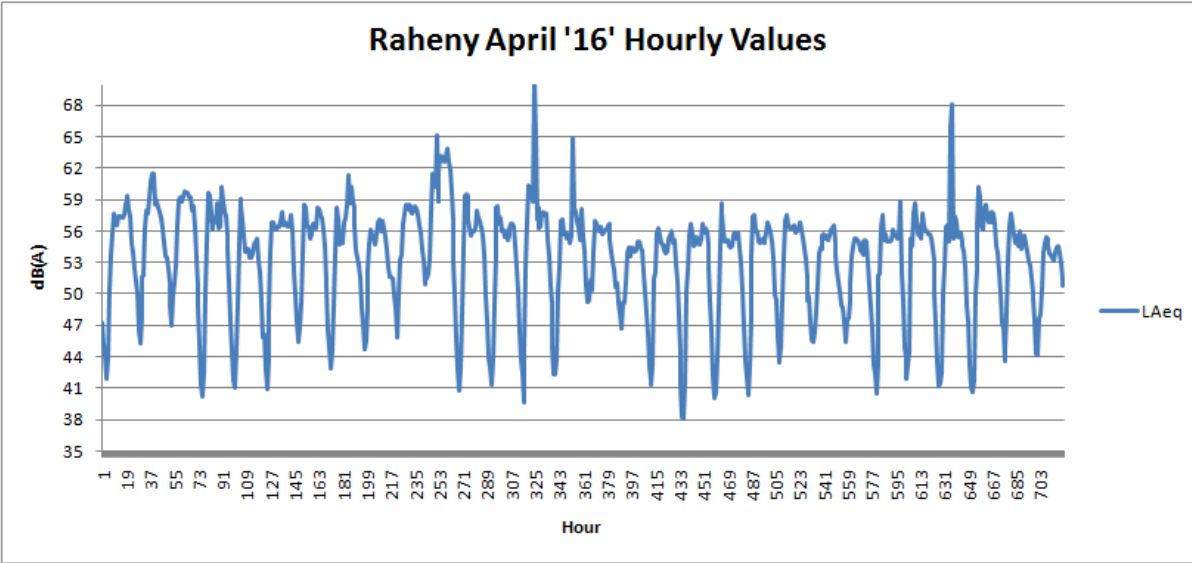


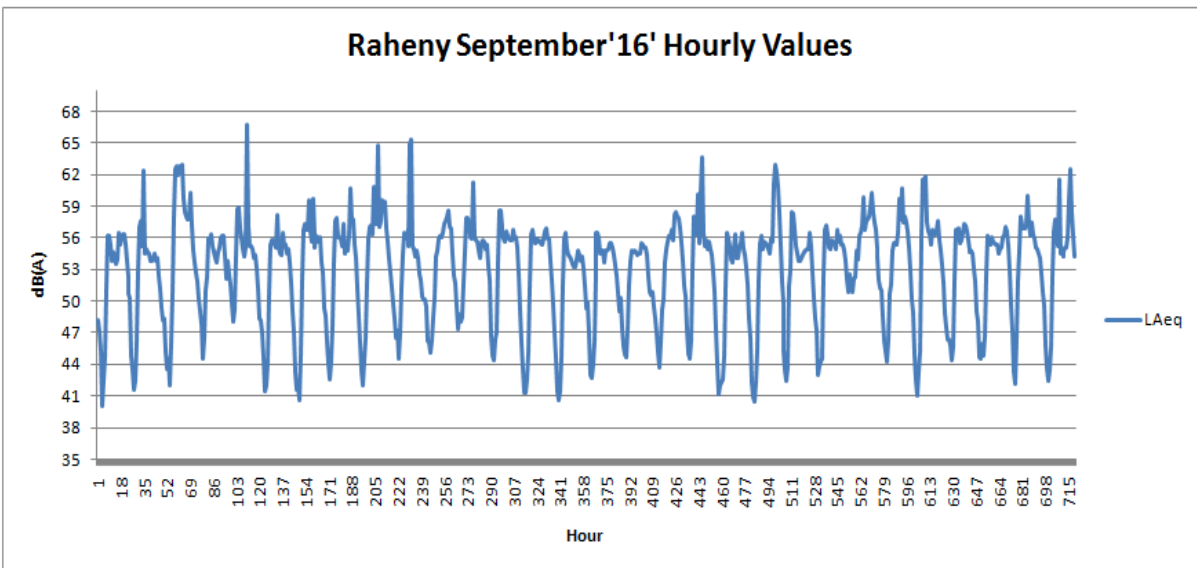
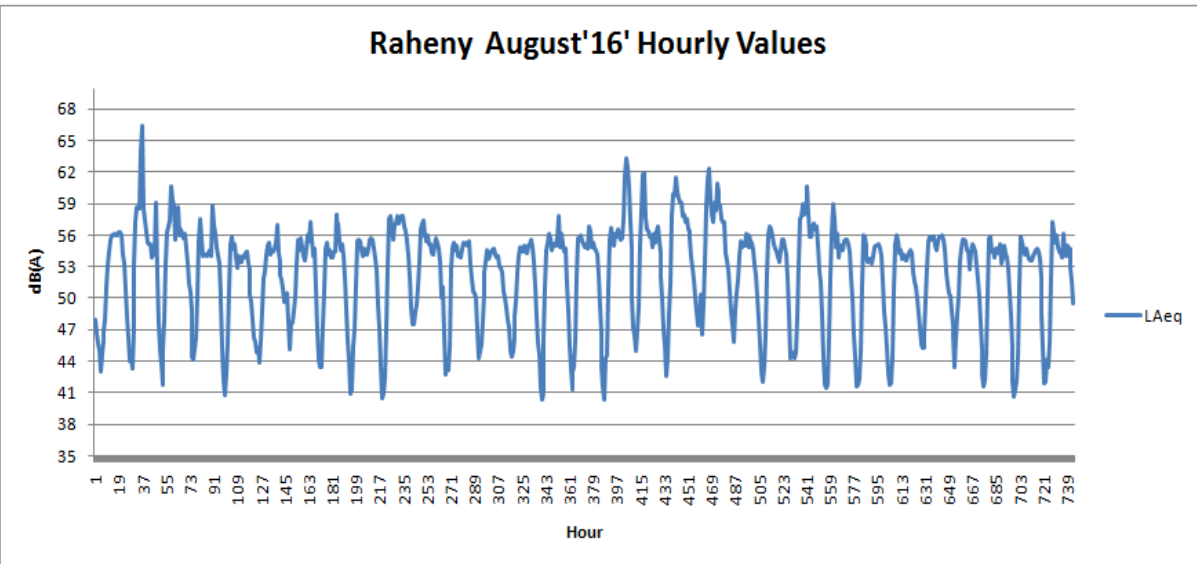
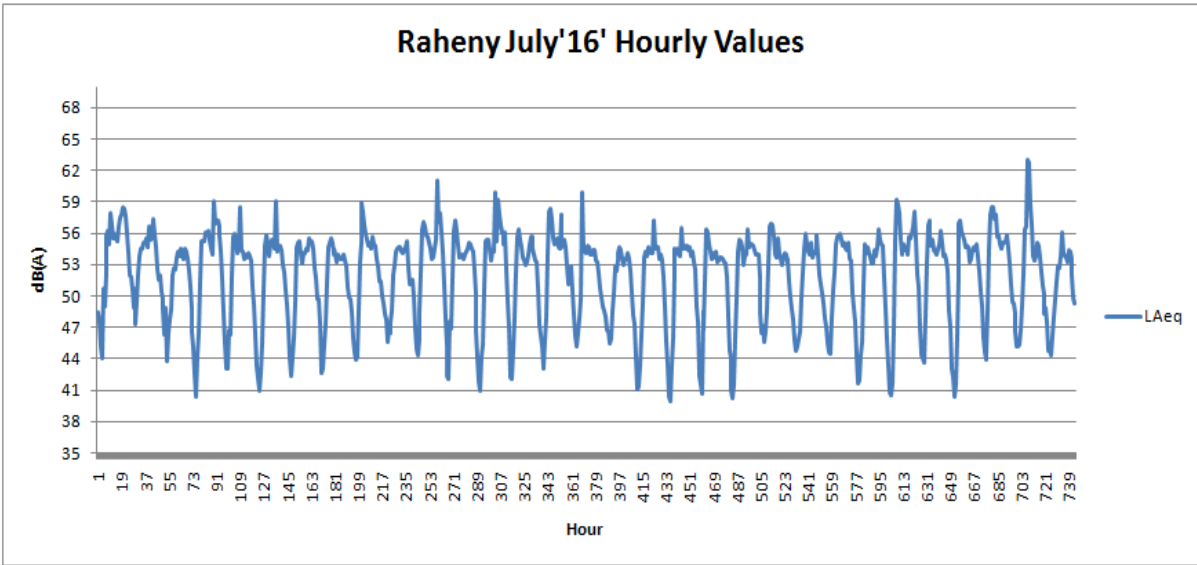
RAHENY LIBRARY
HOWTH ROAD
DUBLIN 5

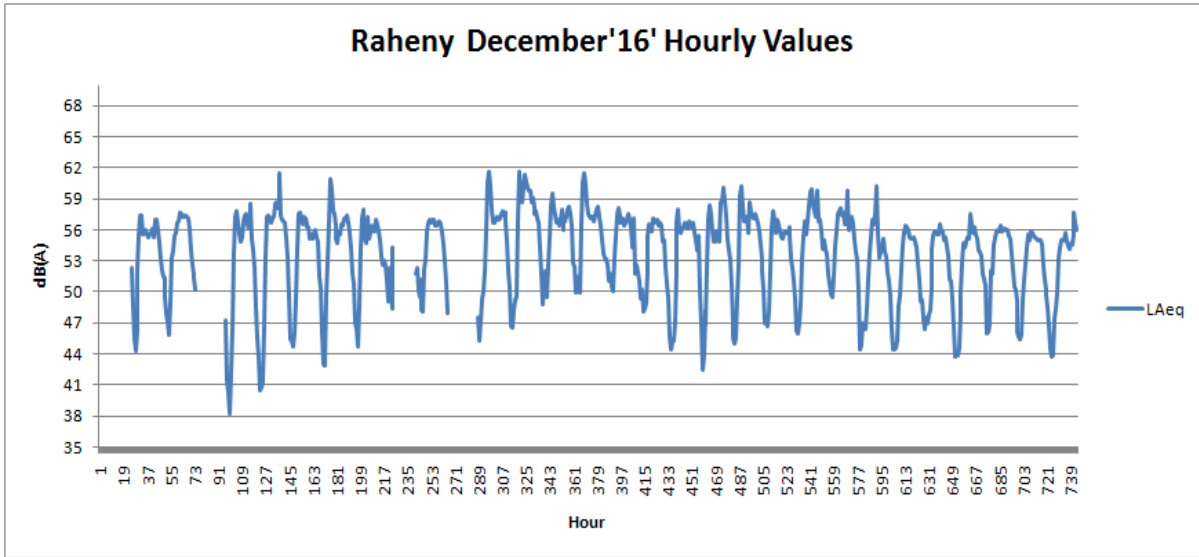
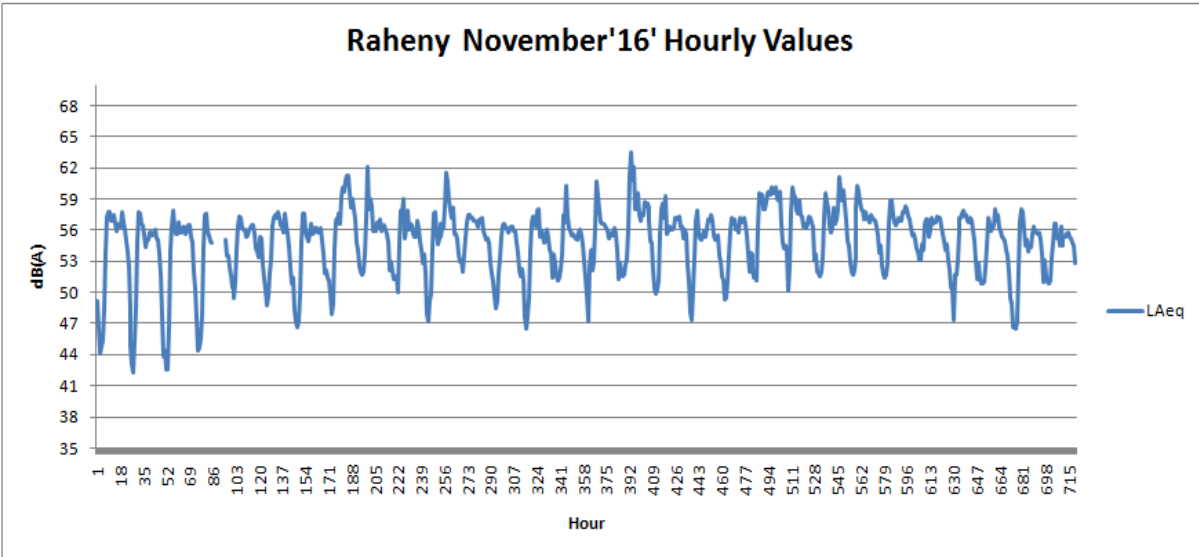
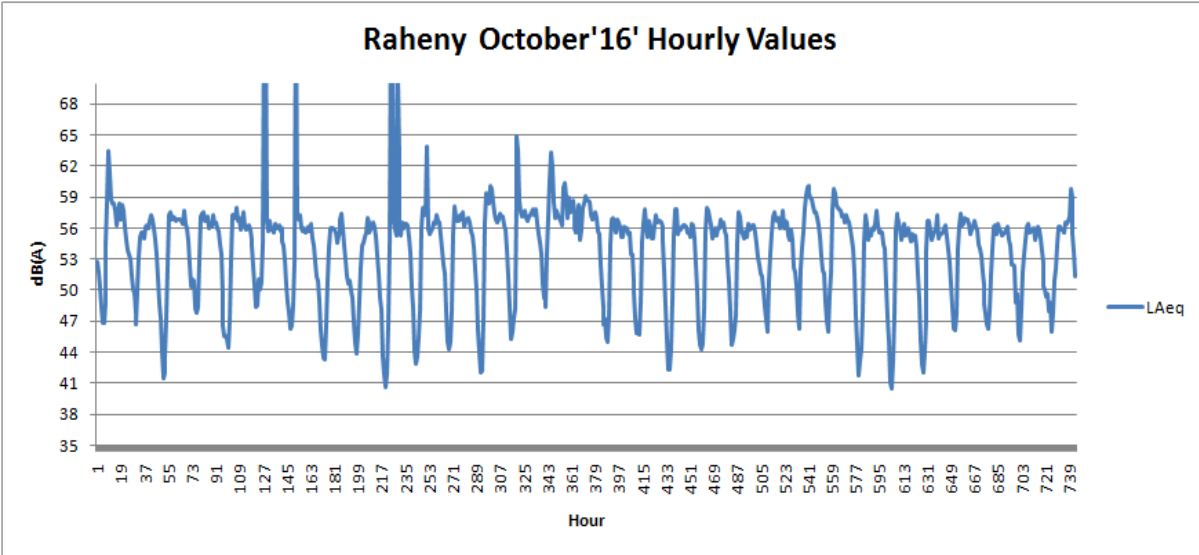




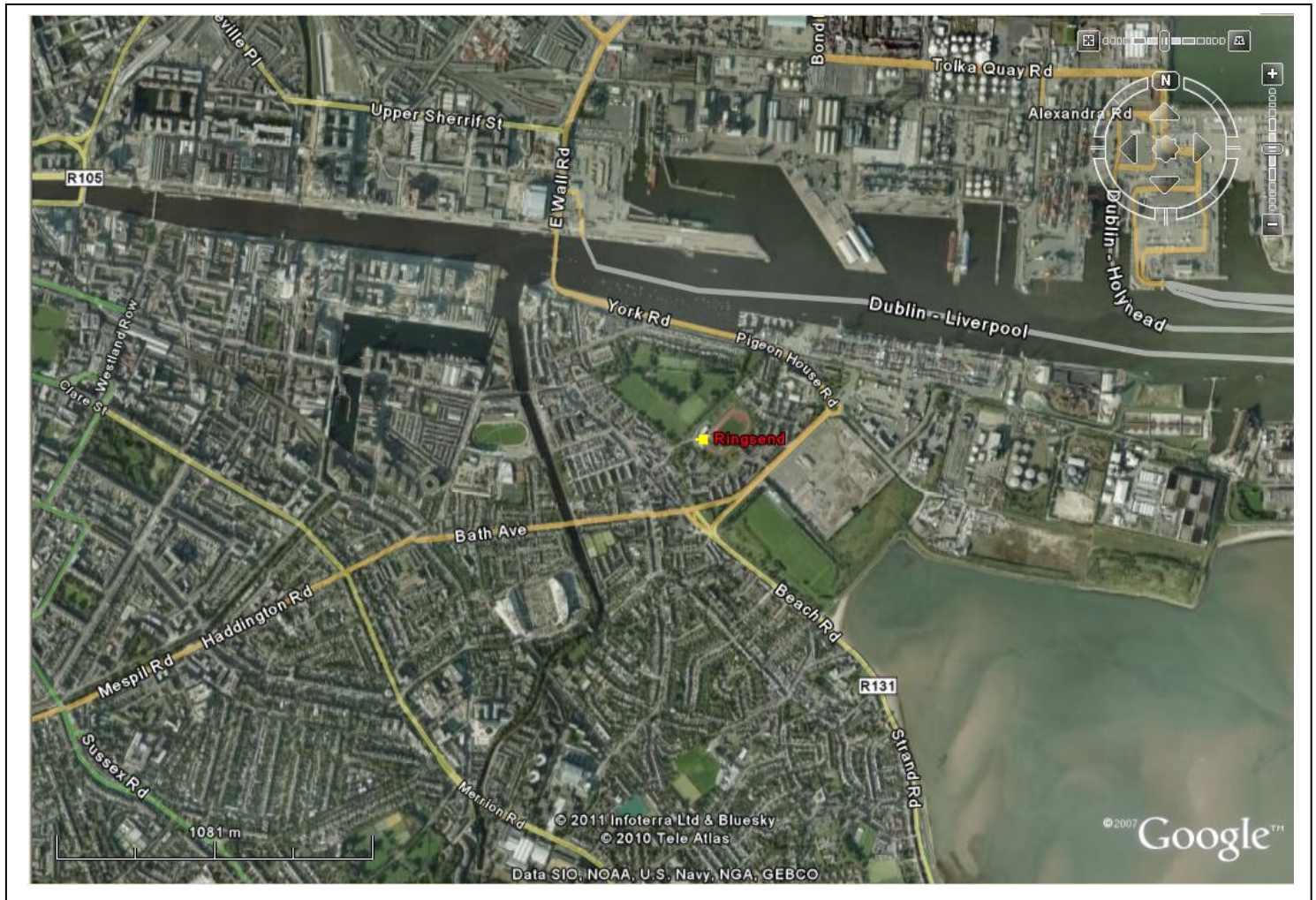


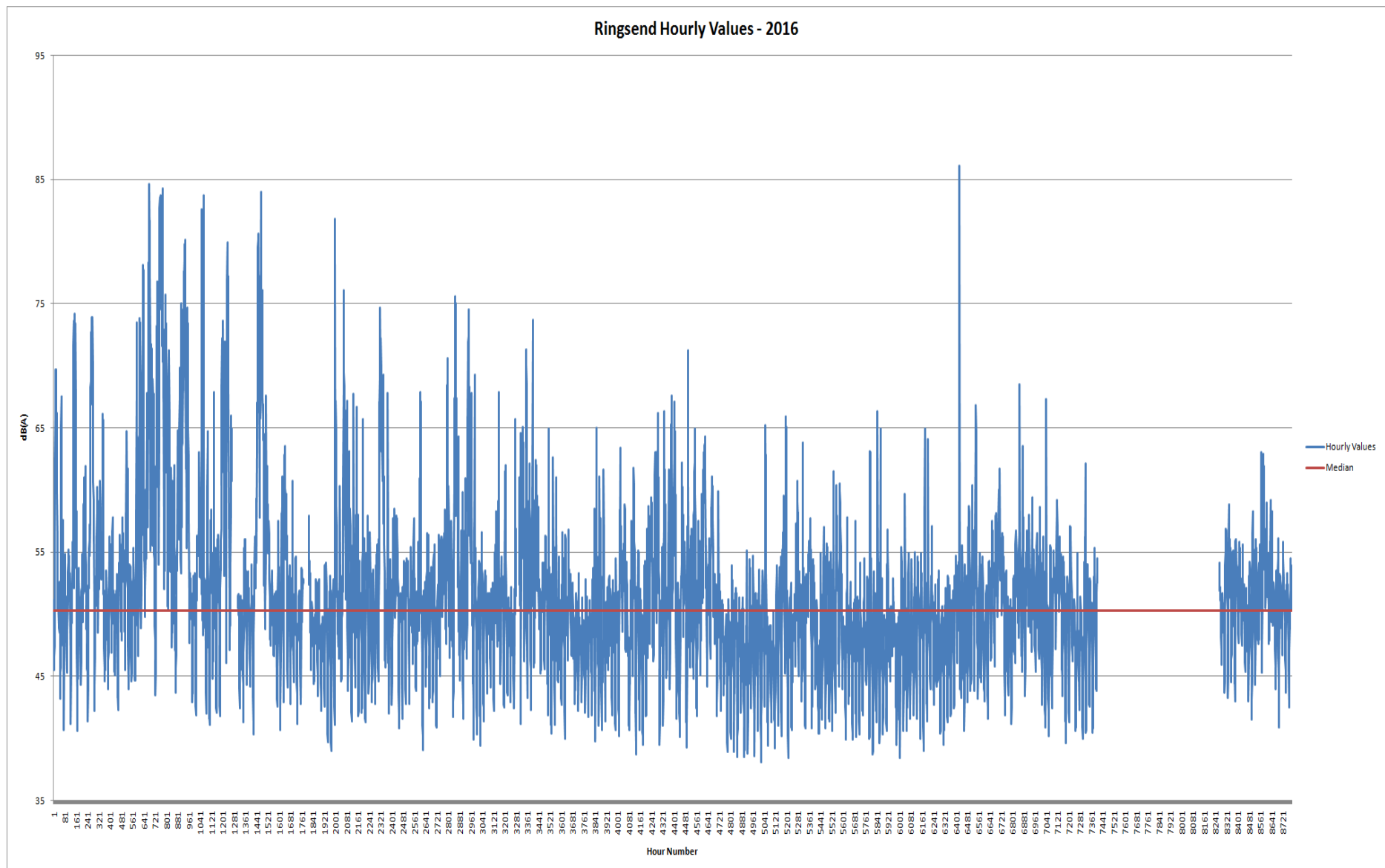


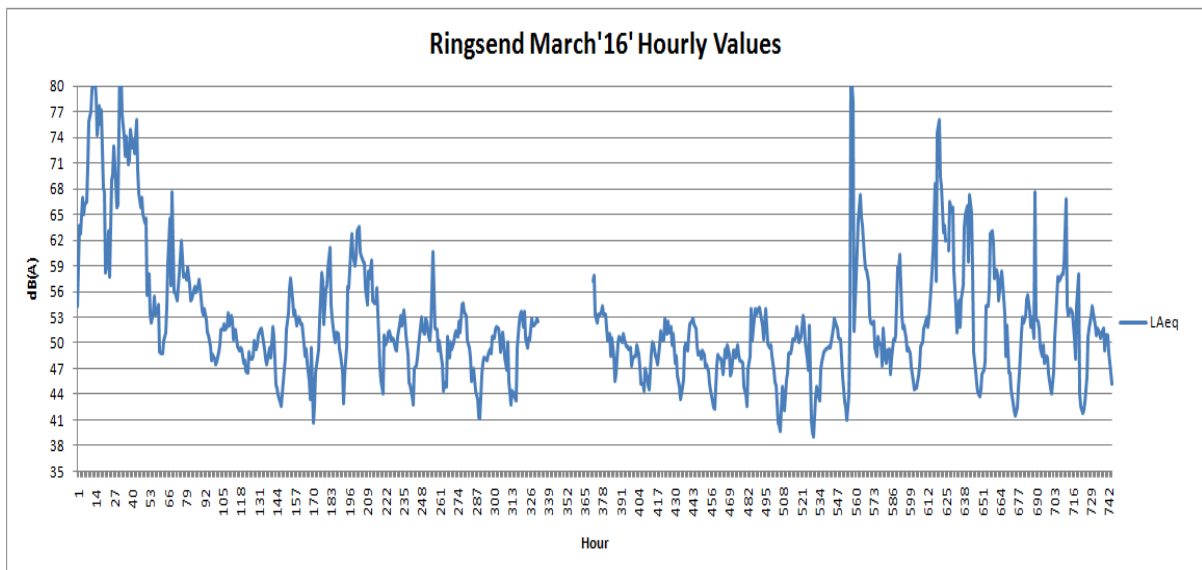
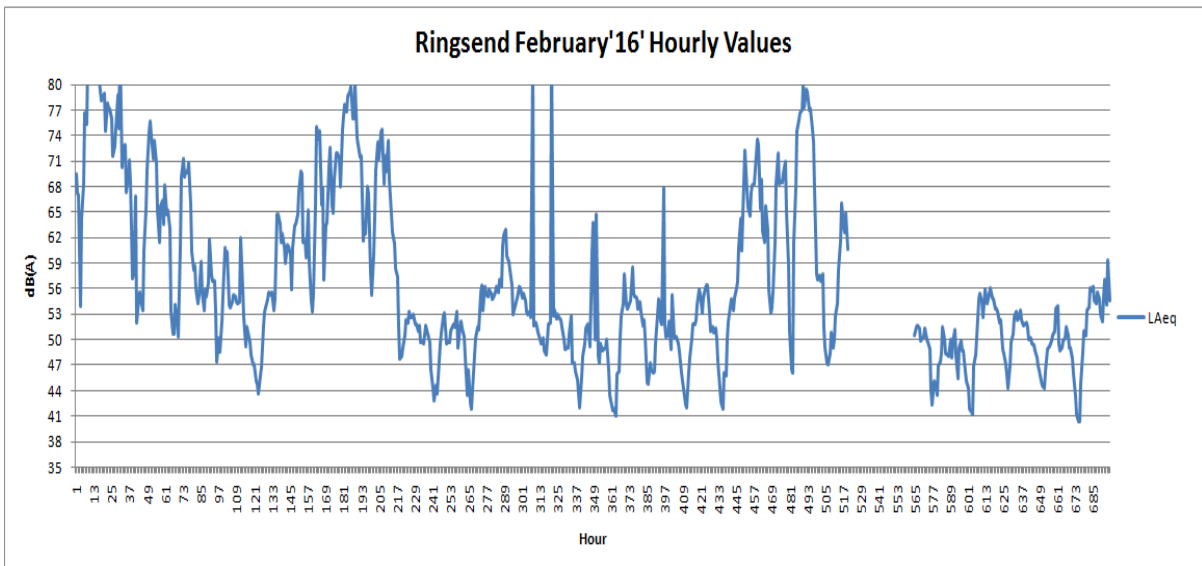
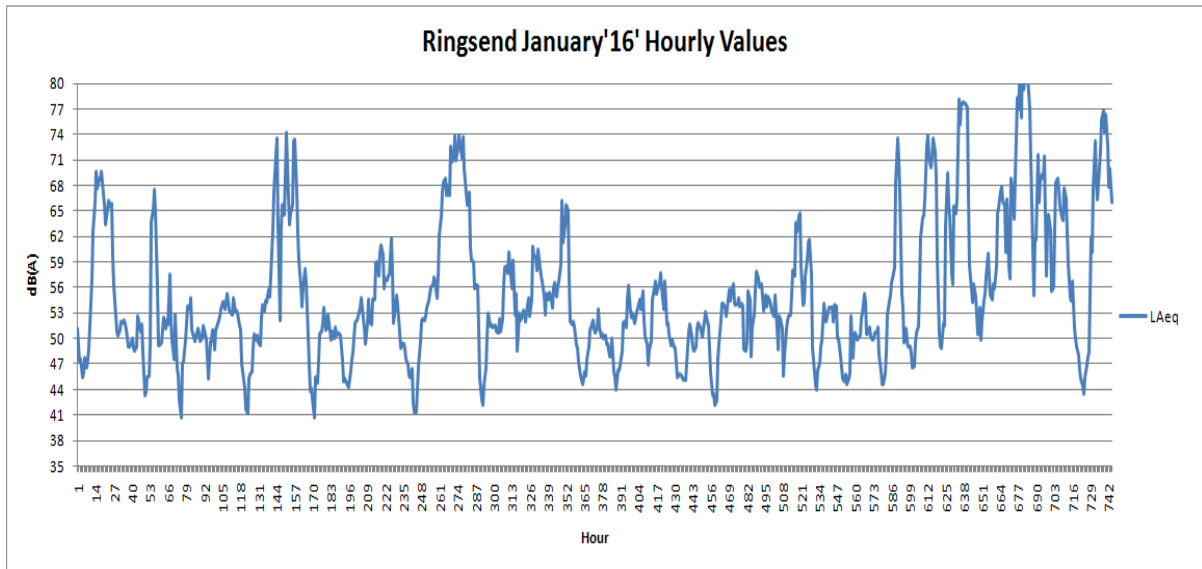


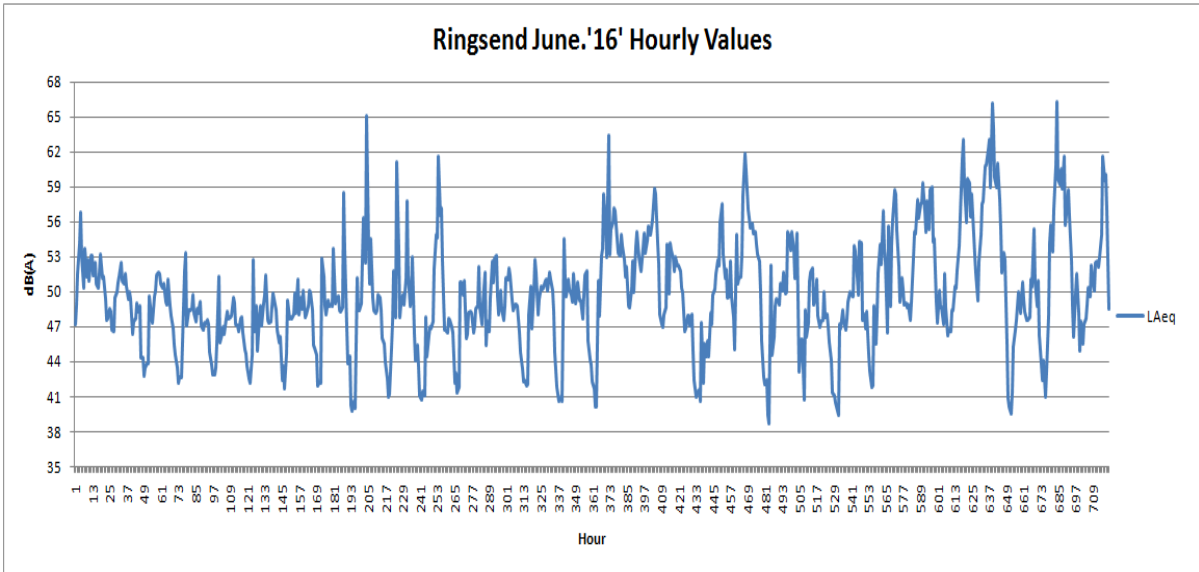
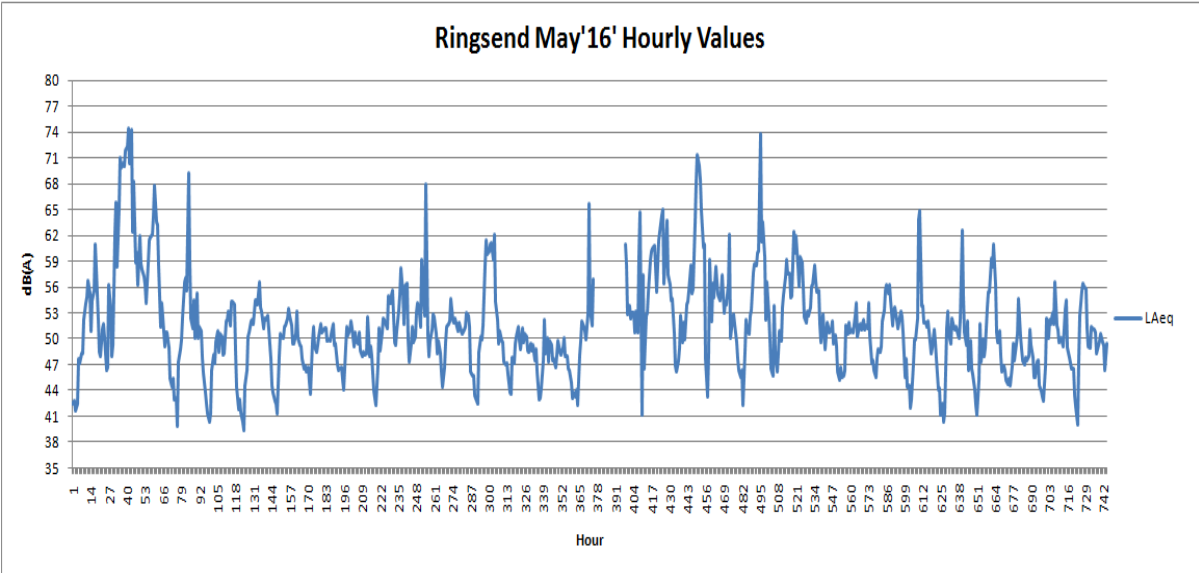
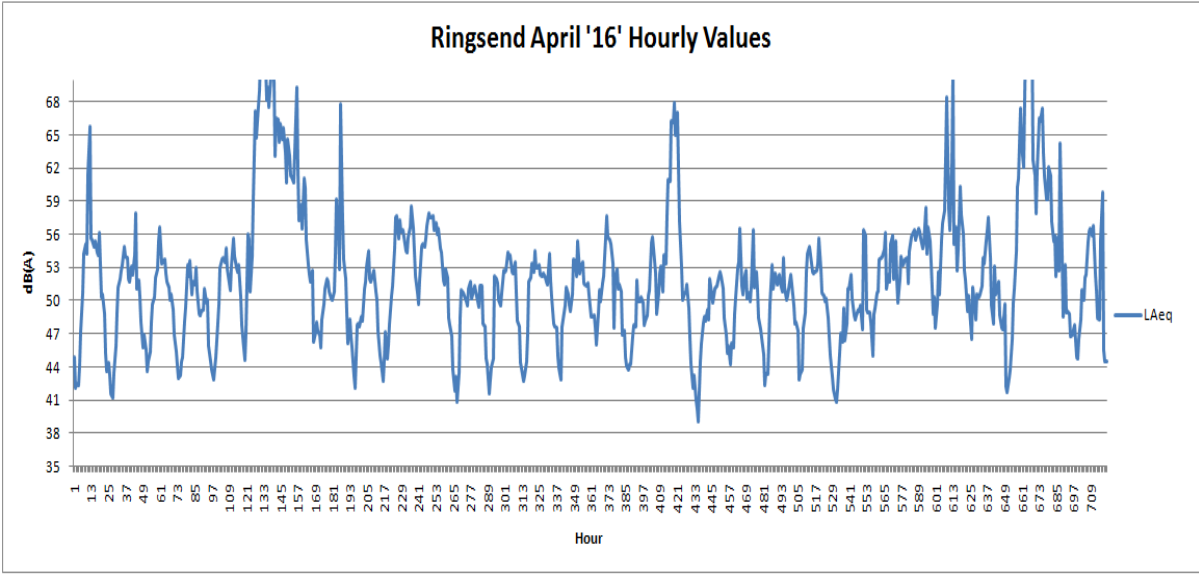


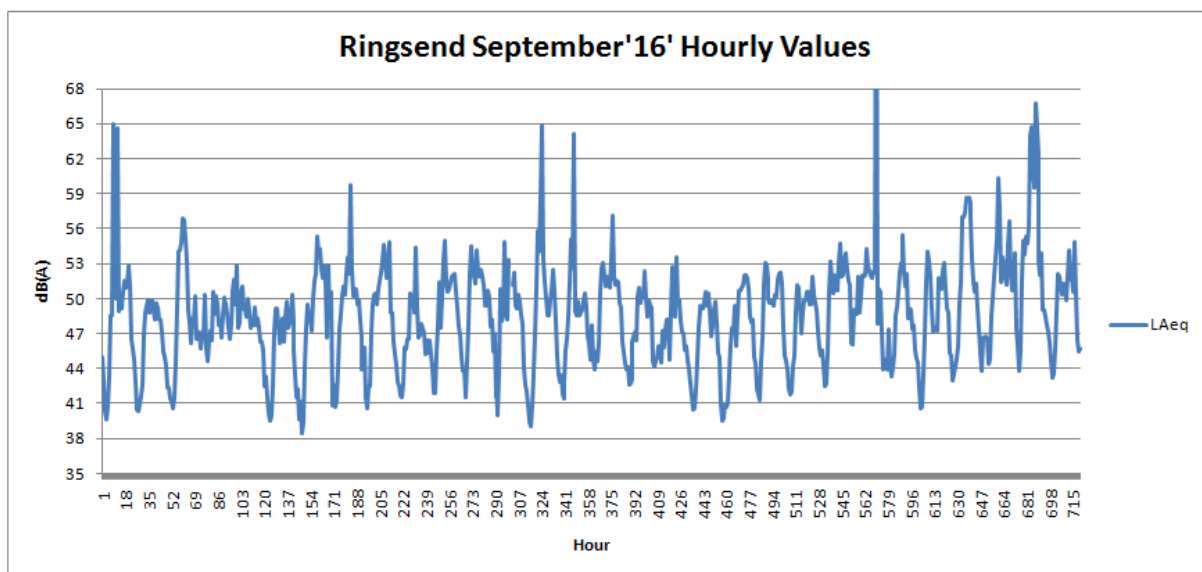
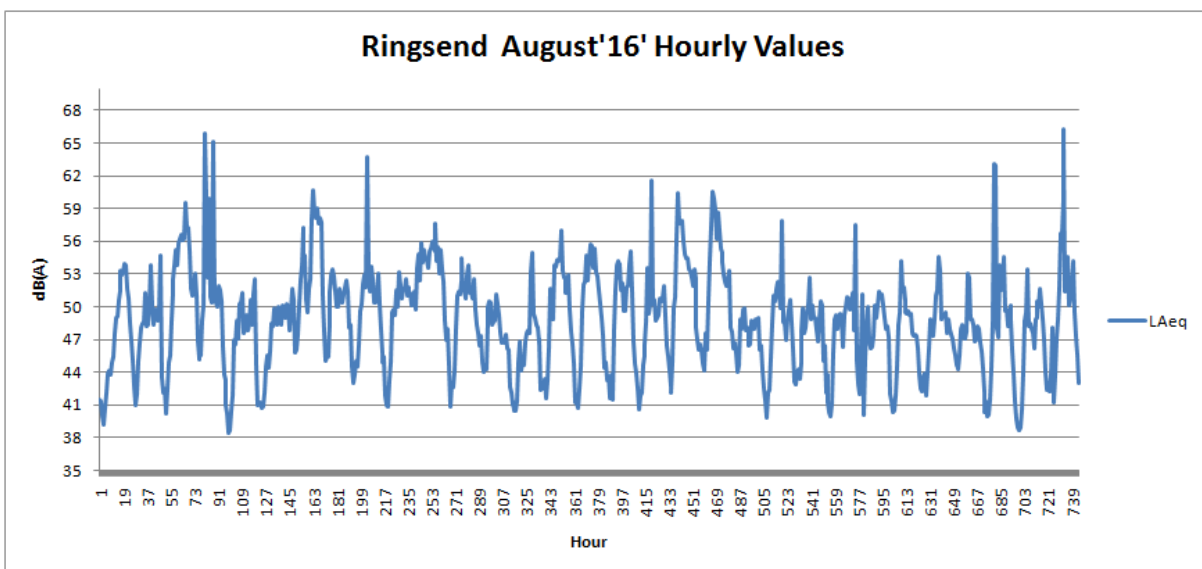
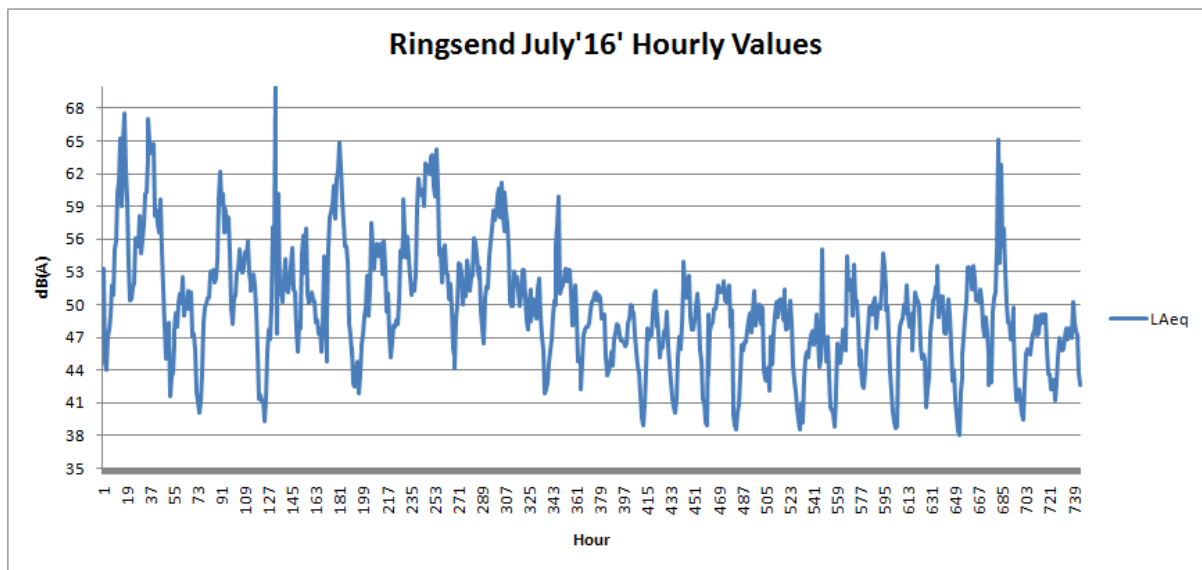
IRISHTOWN SPORTS CENTRE
RINGSEND
DUBLIN 4

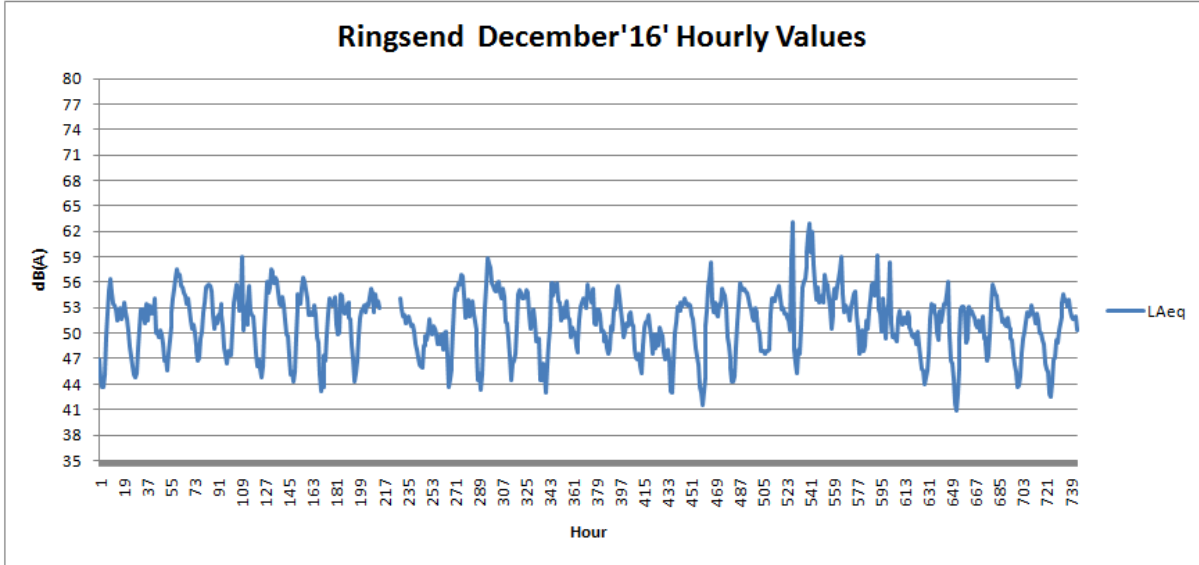
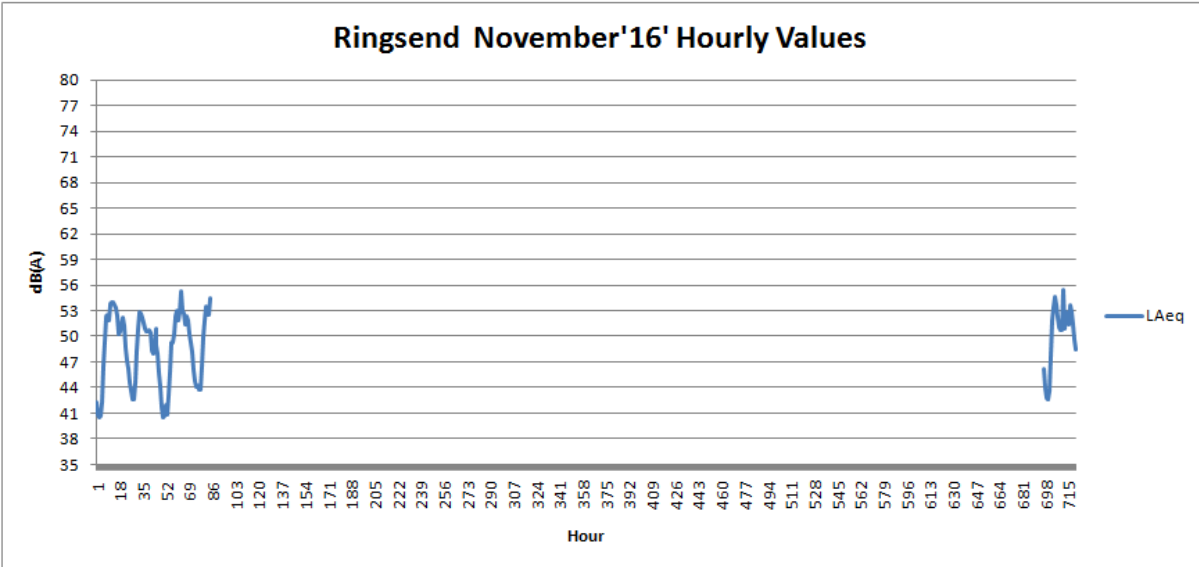
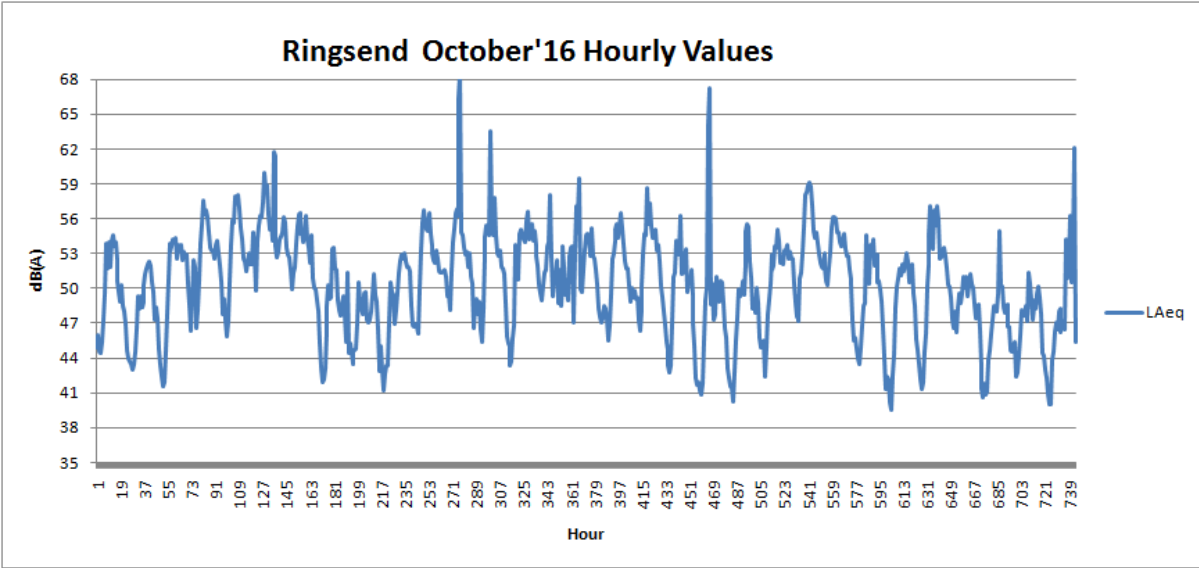






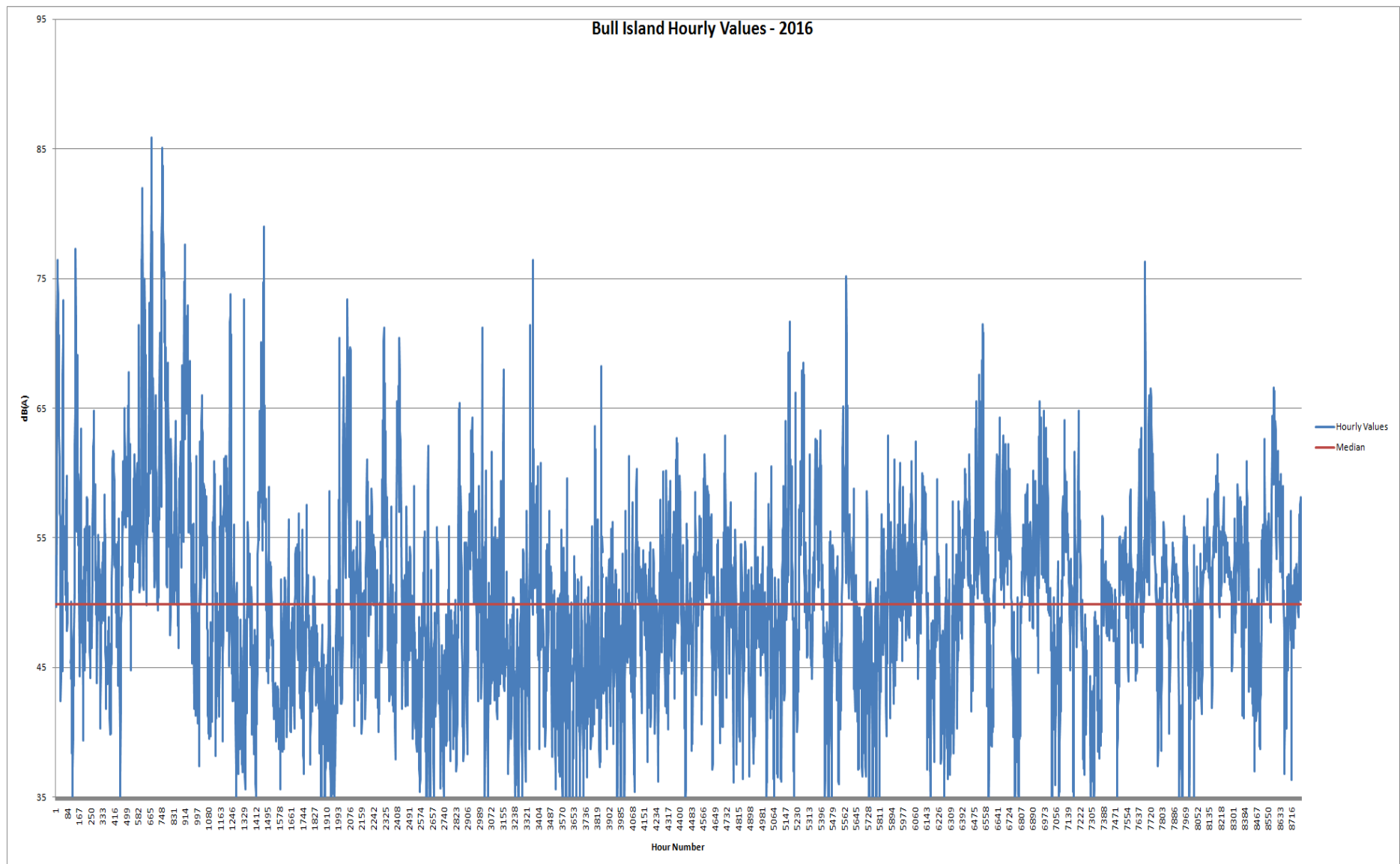


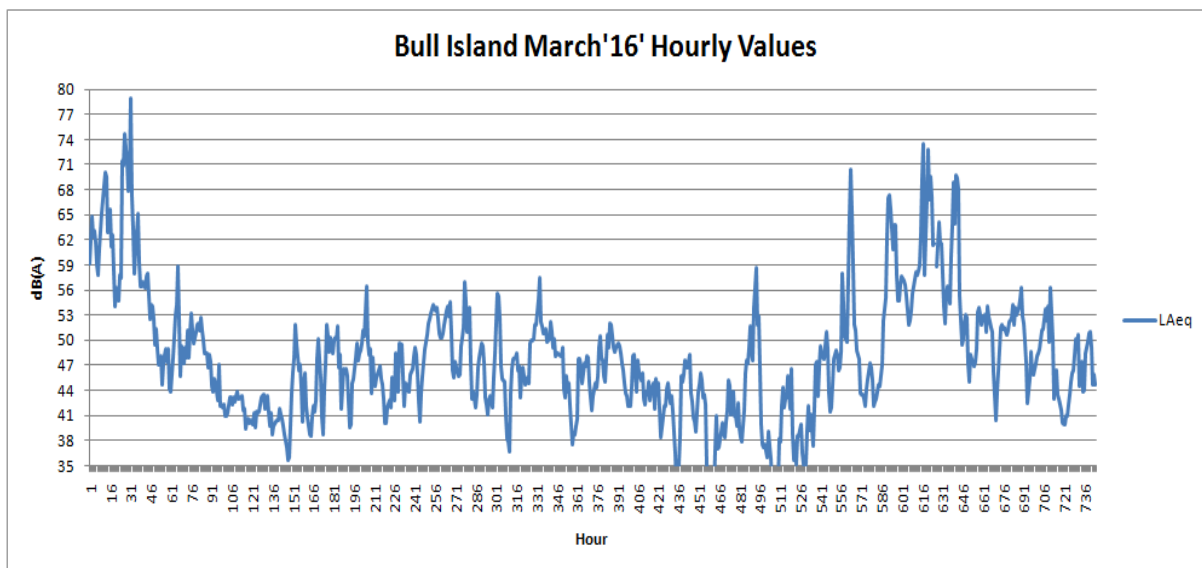
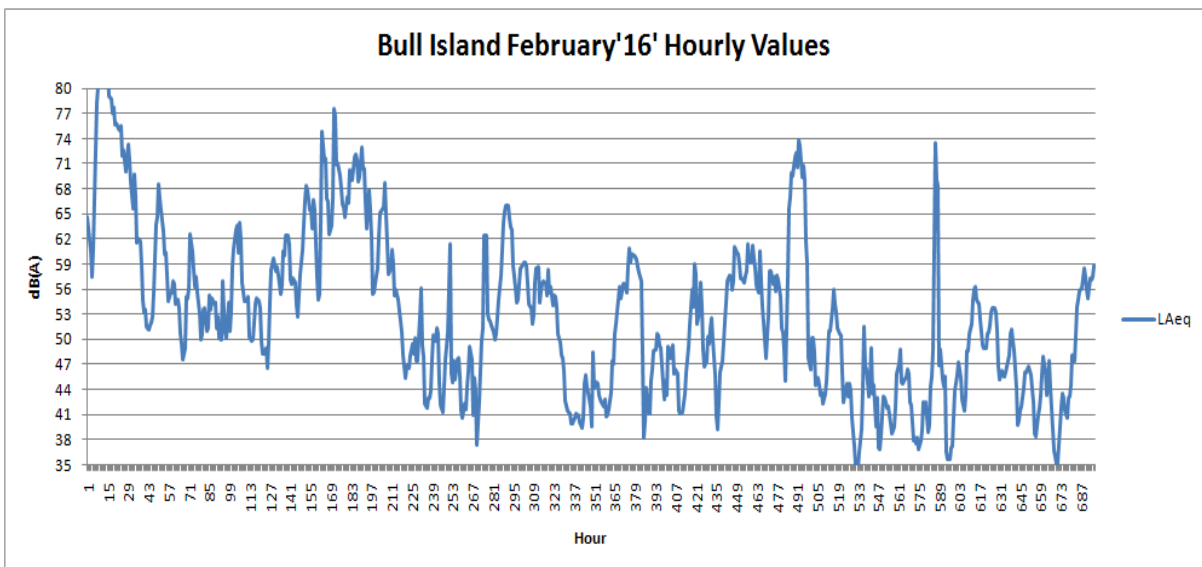
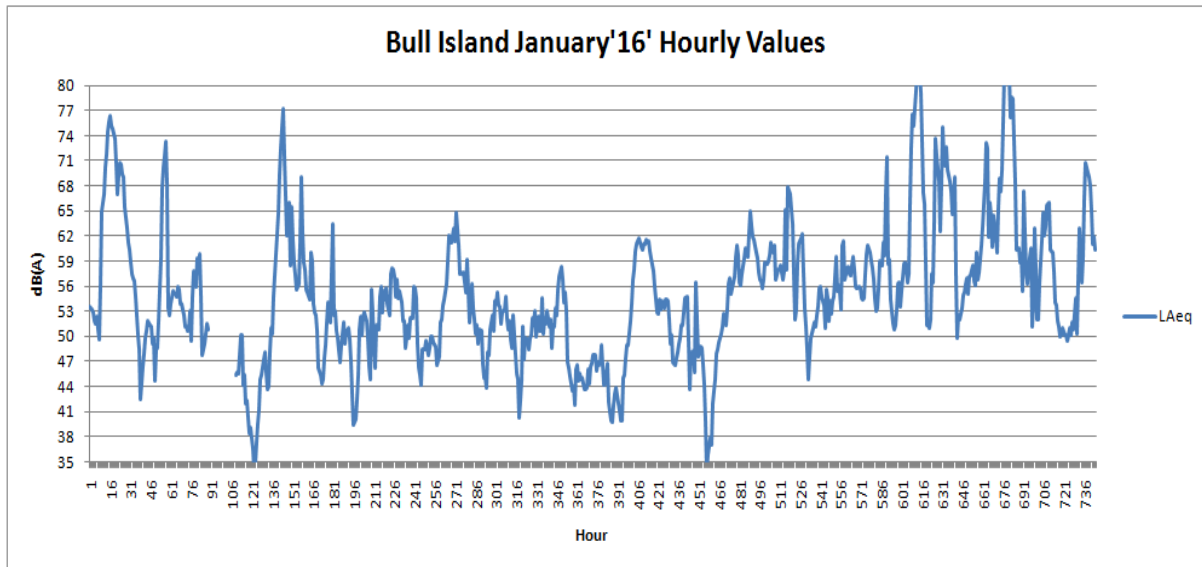


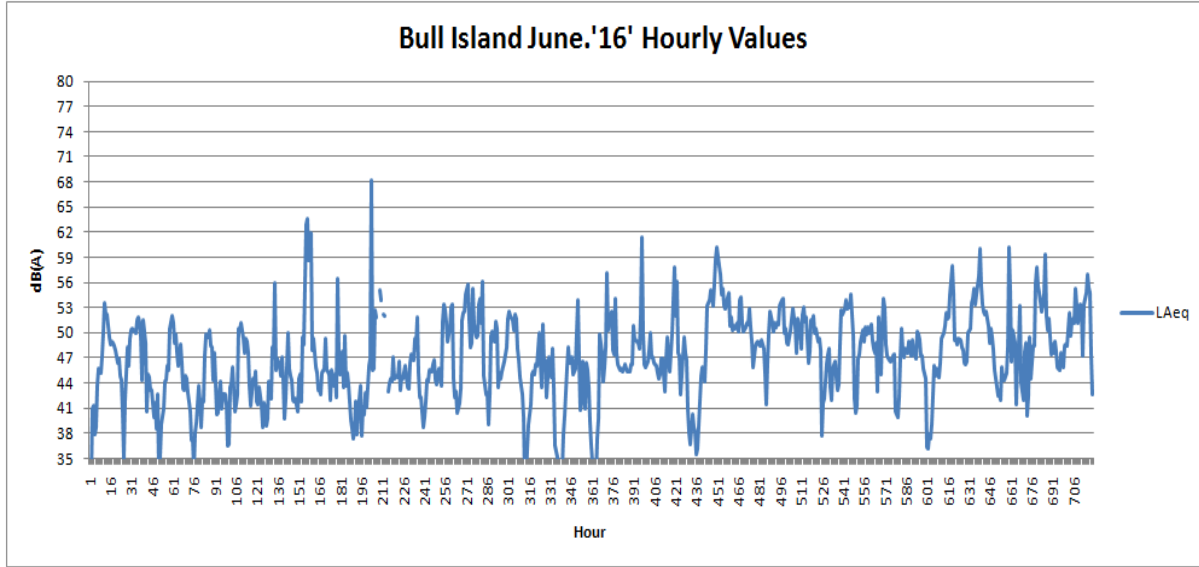
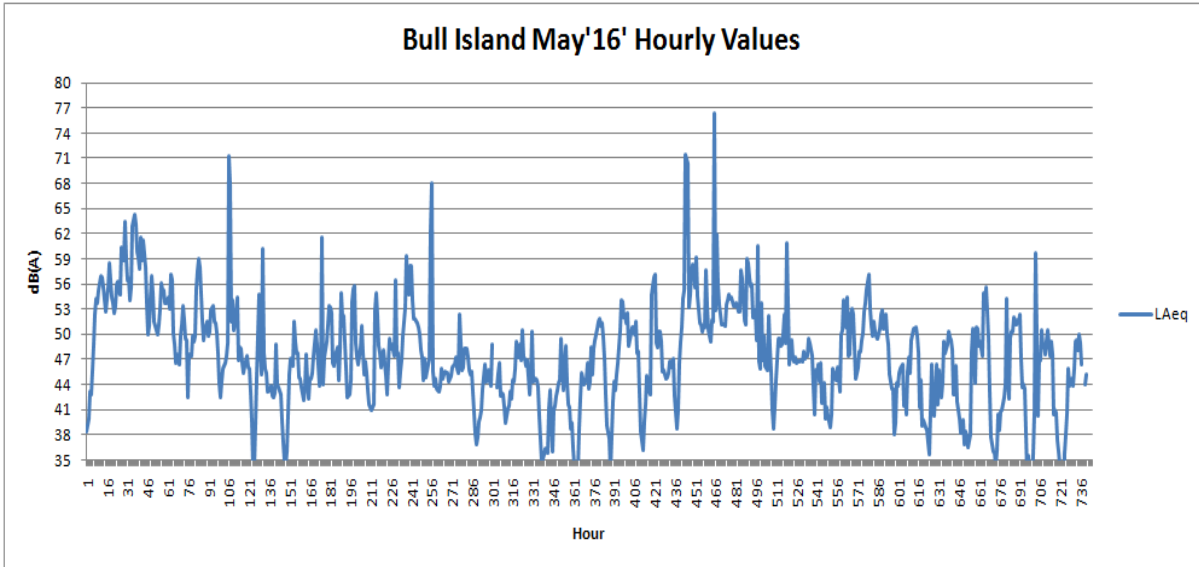
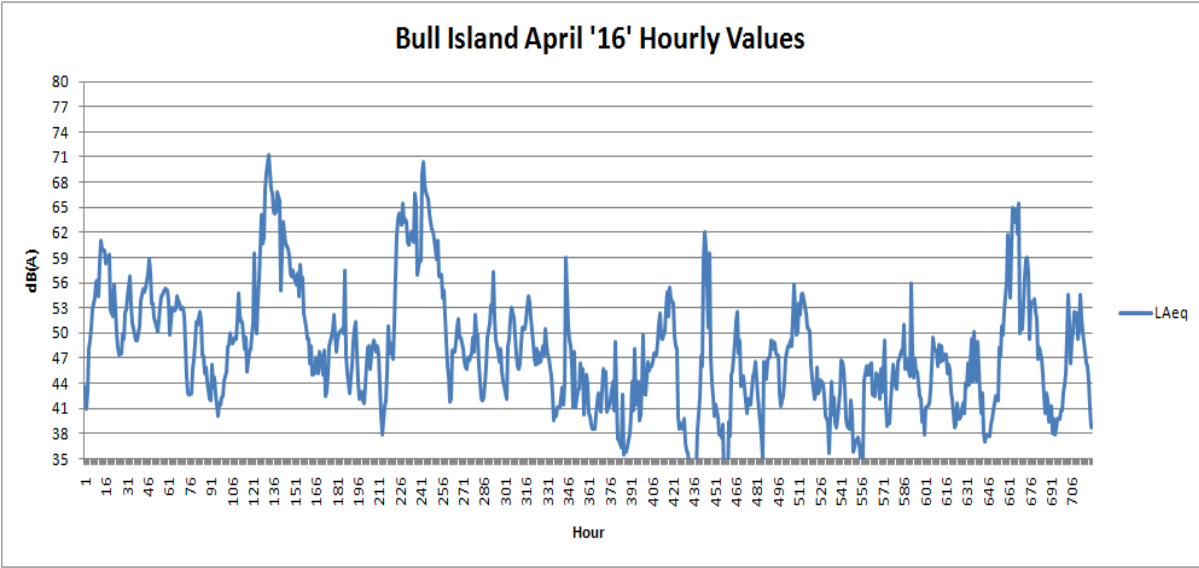


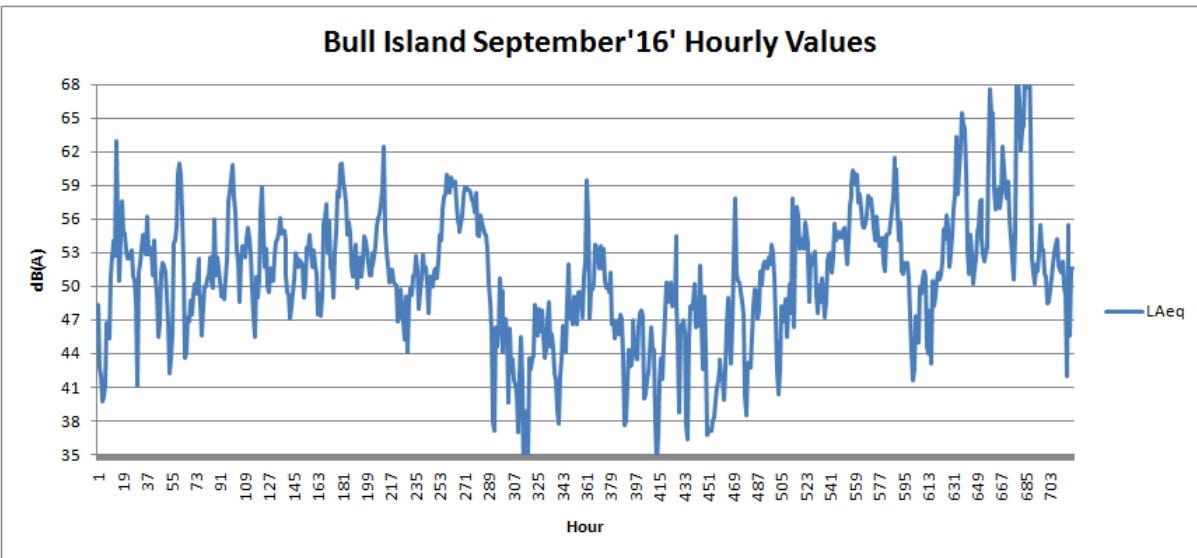
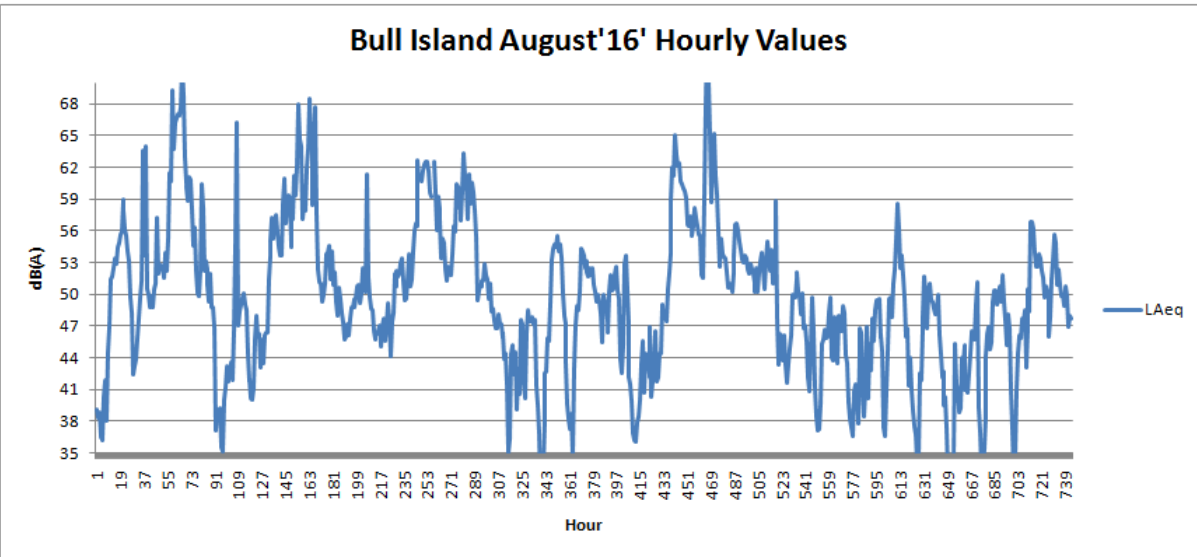
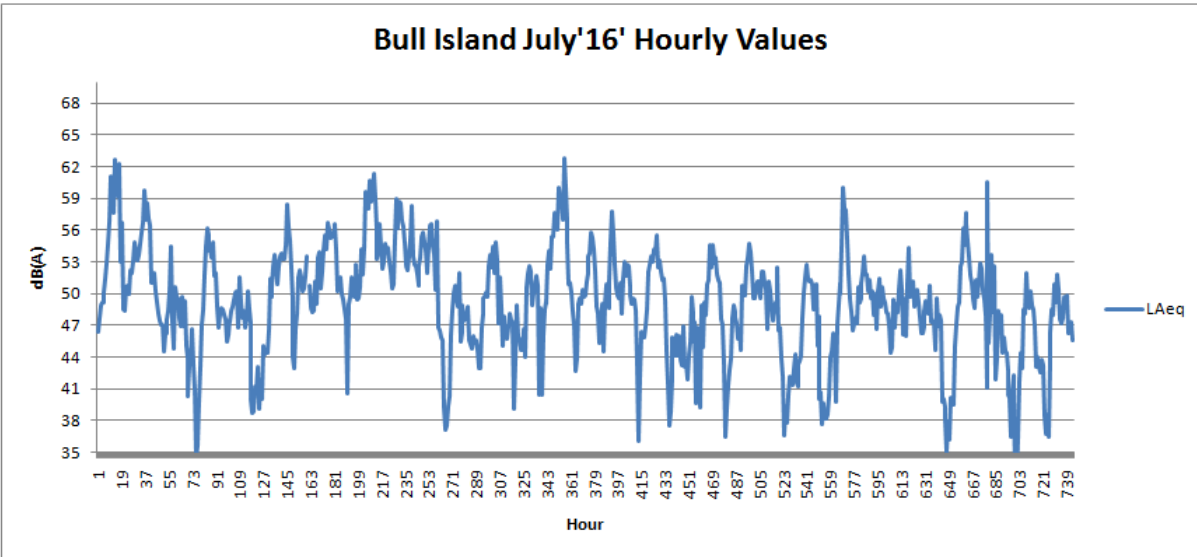
BULL ISLAND INTERPRETATIVE CENTRE
BULL ISLAND
DUBLIN 3

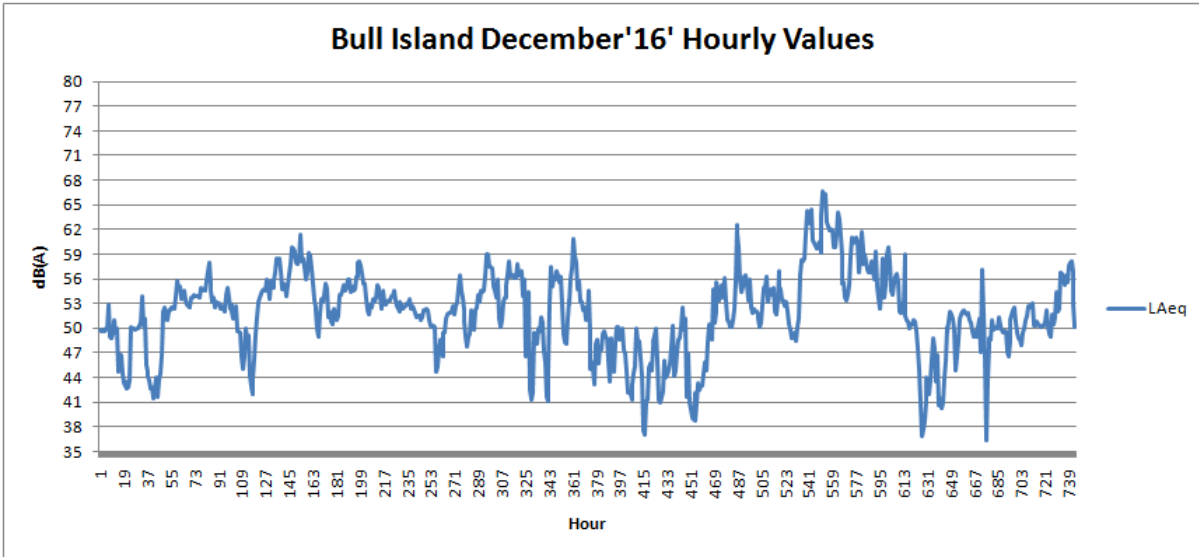
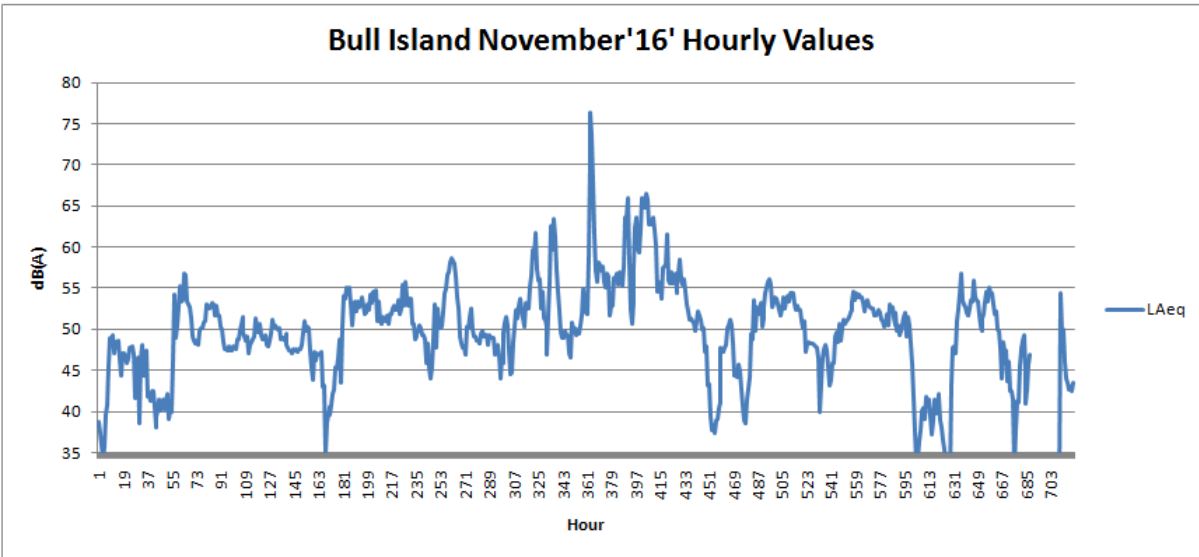
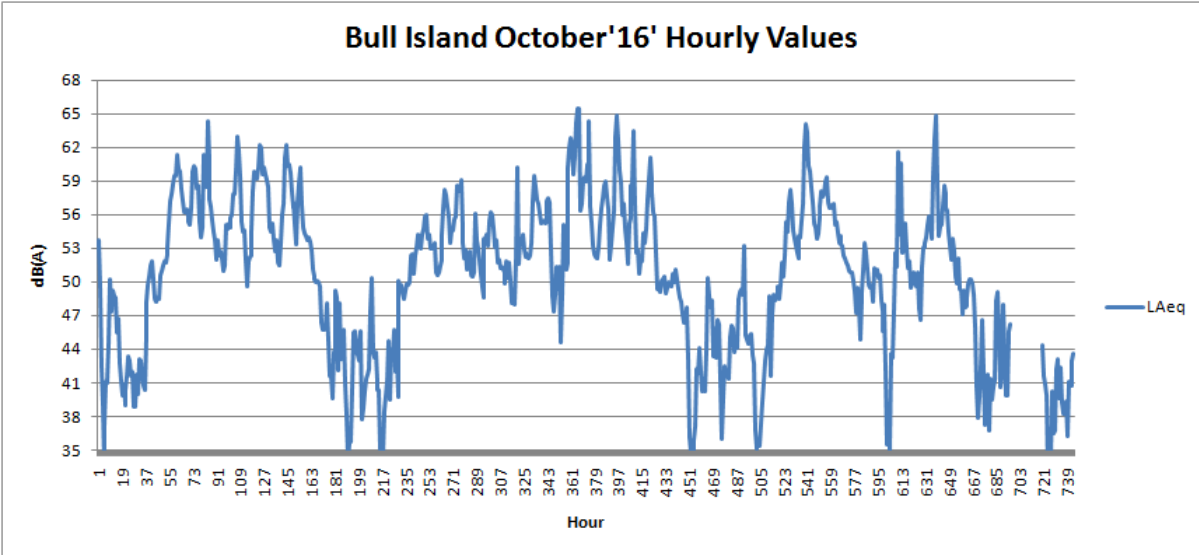






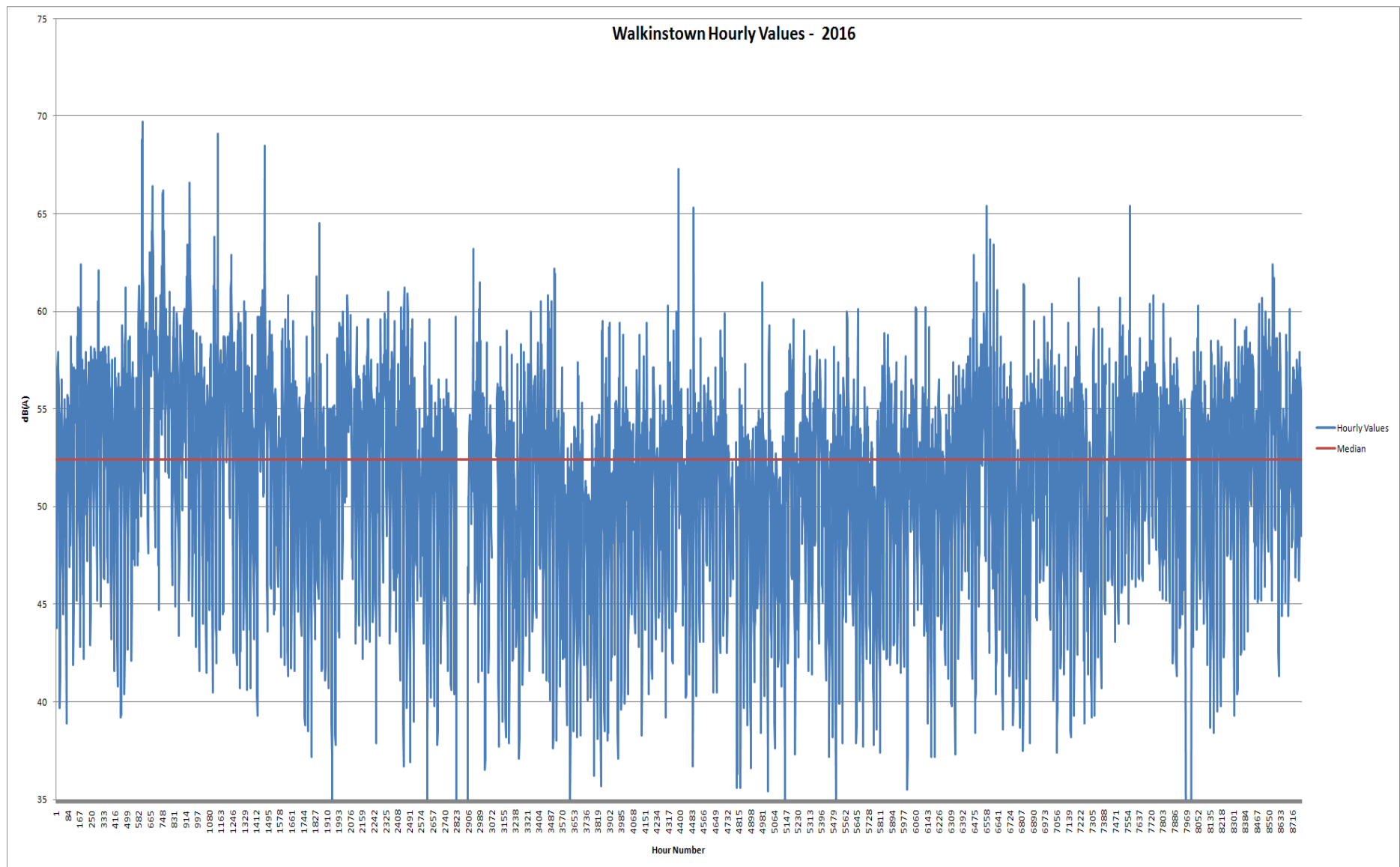


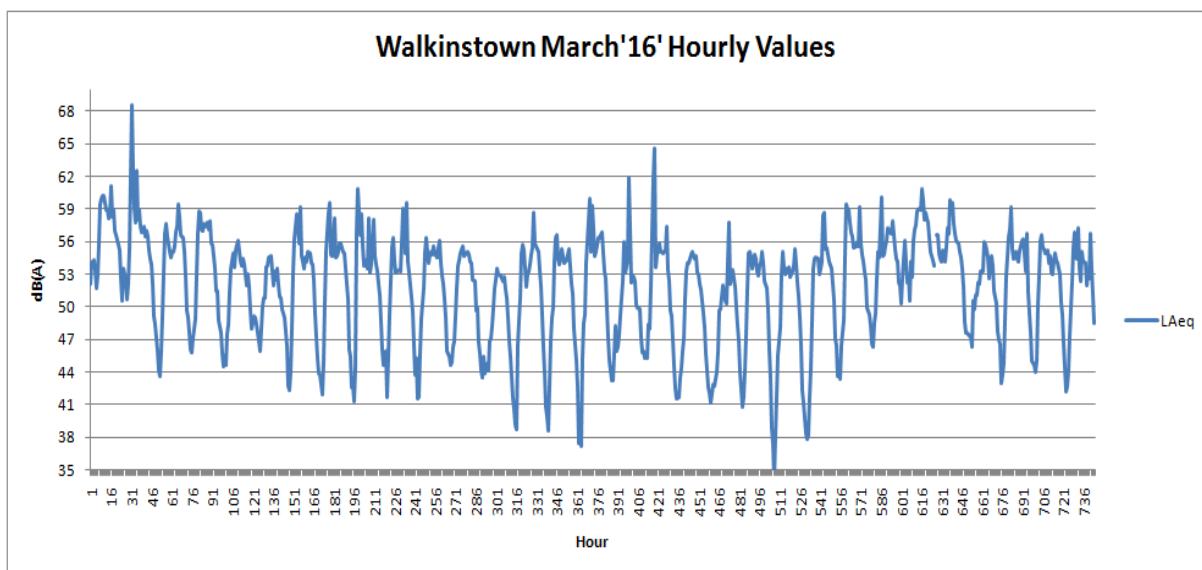
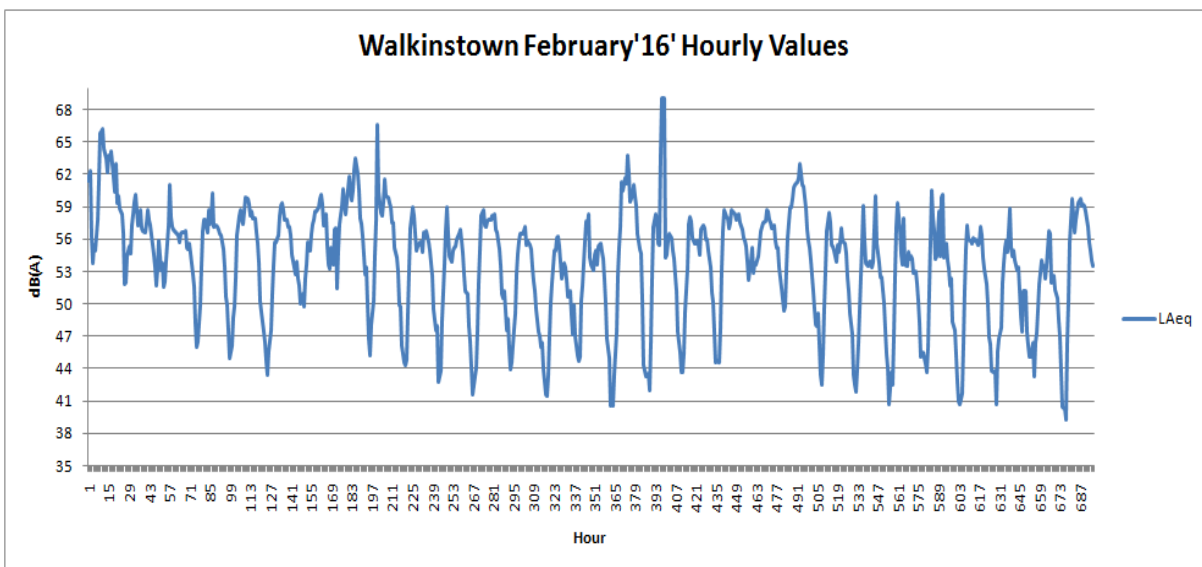
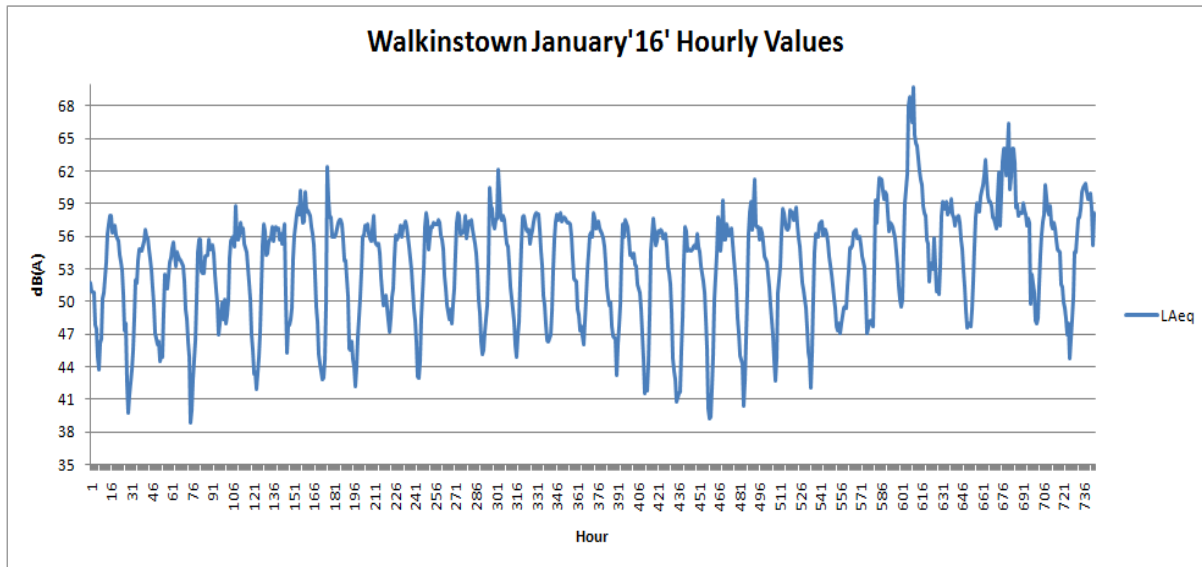


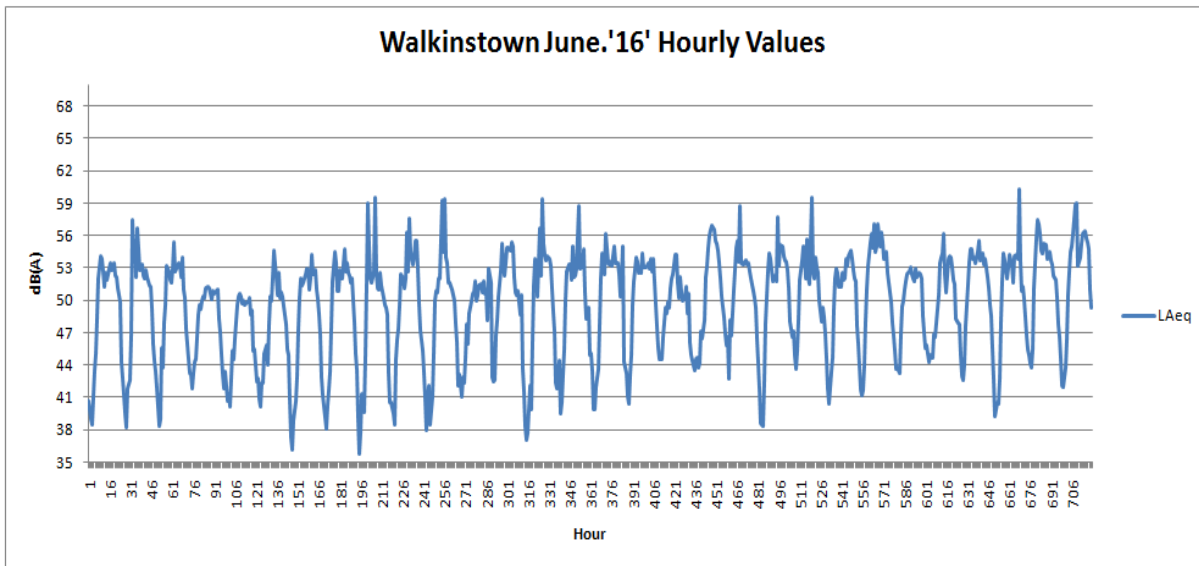
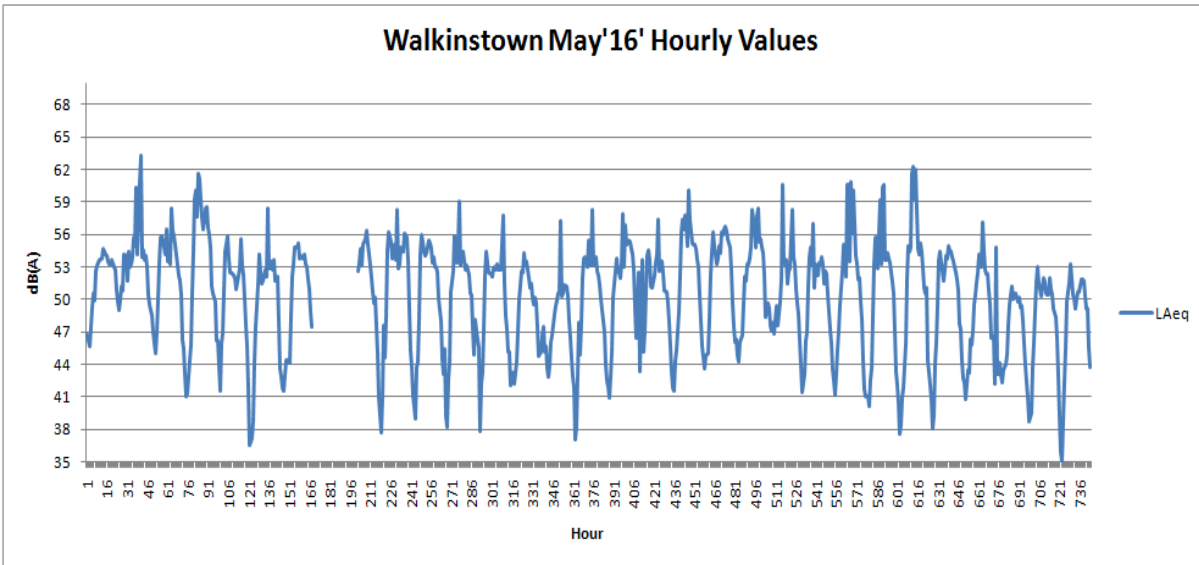
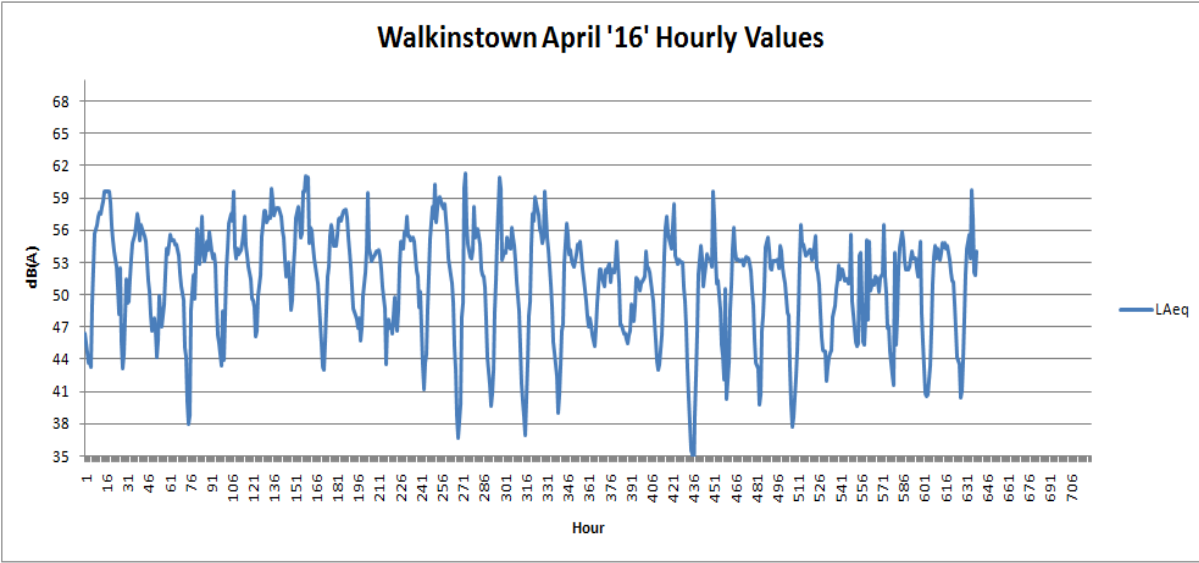


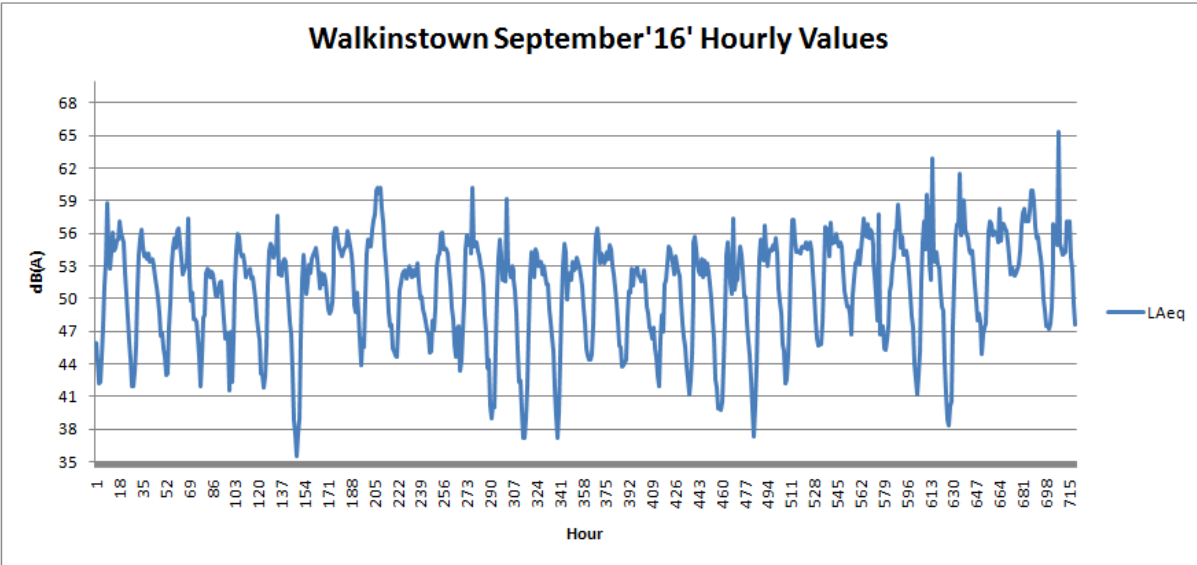
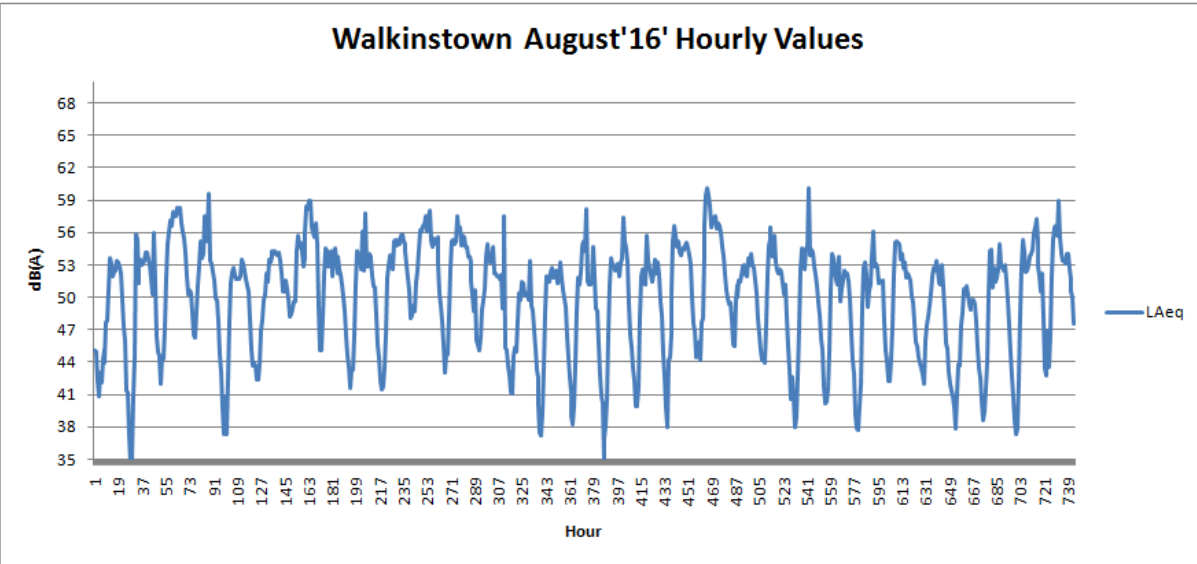
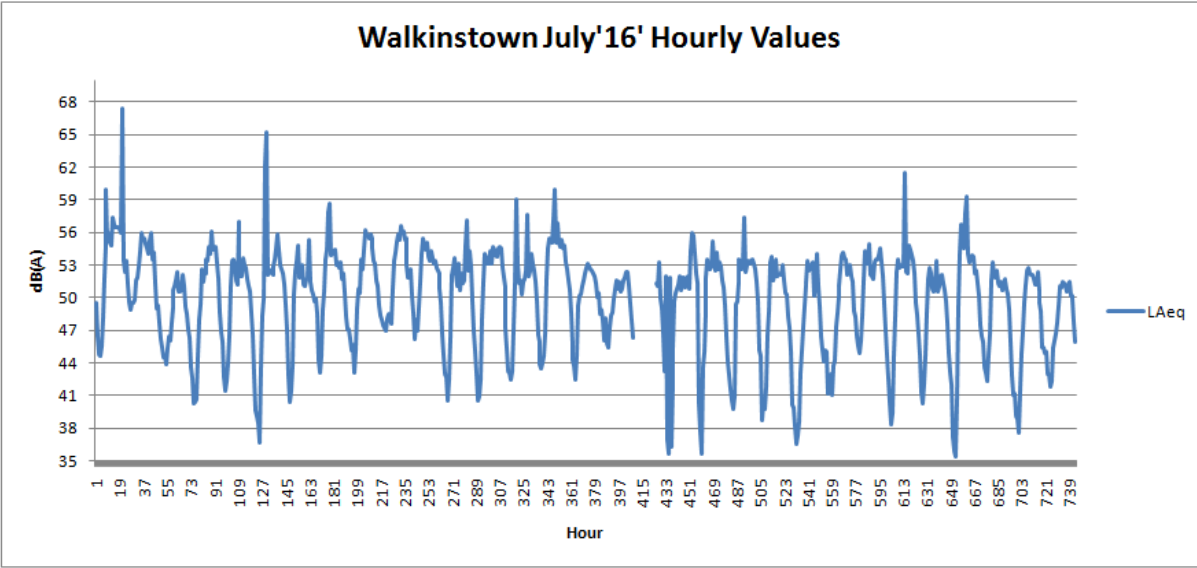
WALKINSTOWN LIBRARY
PERCY FRENCH ROAD
DUBLIN 12

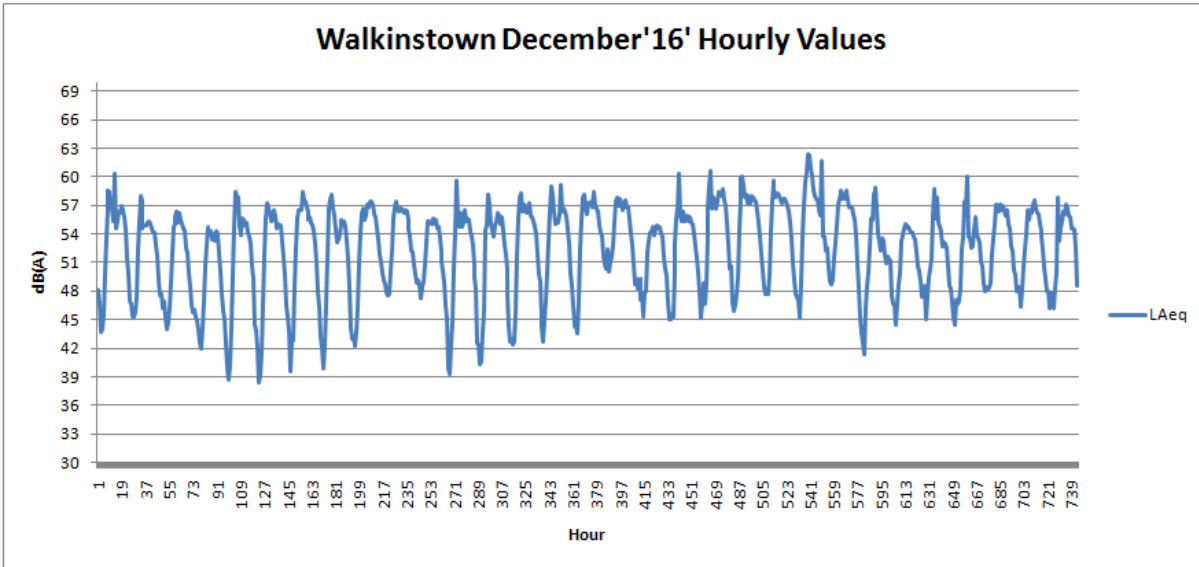
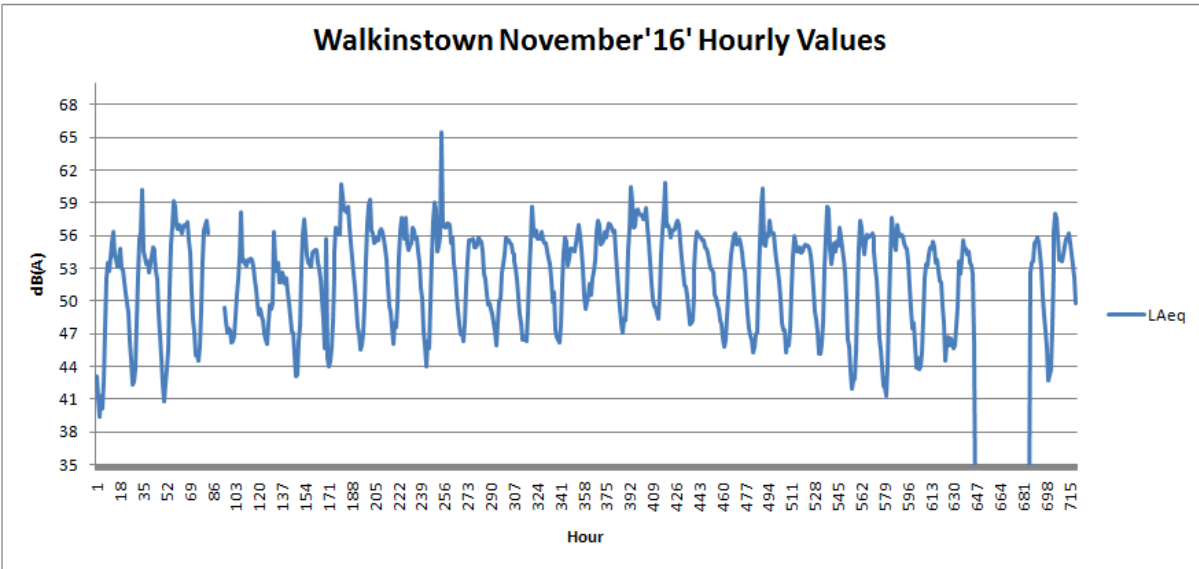
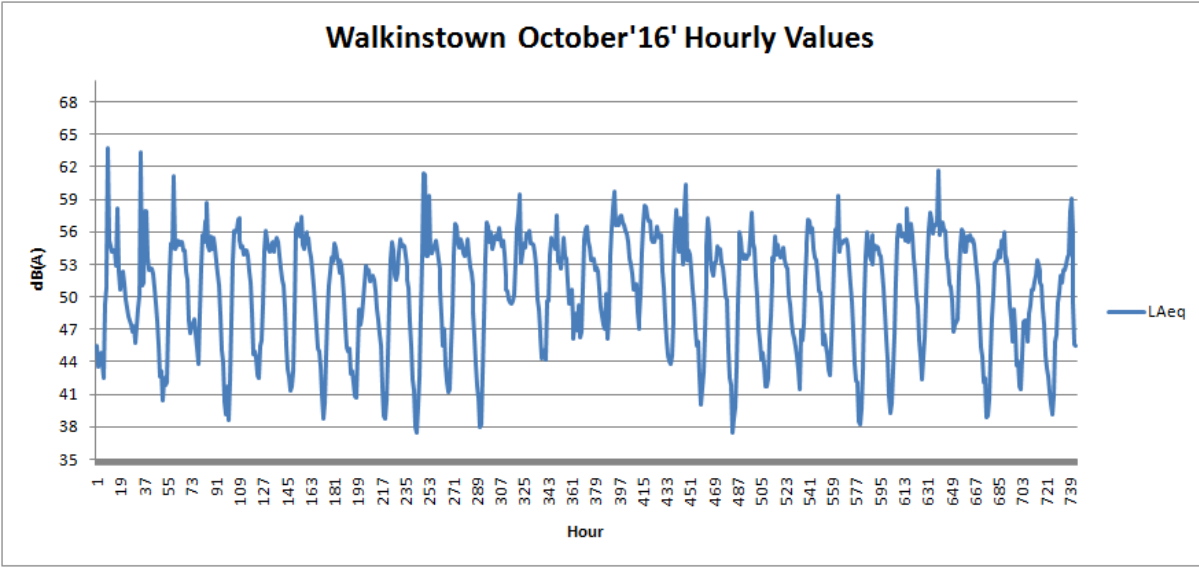






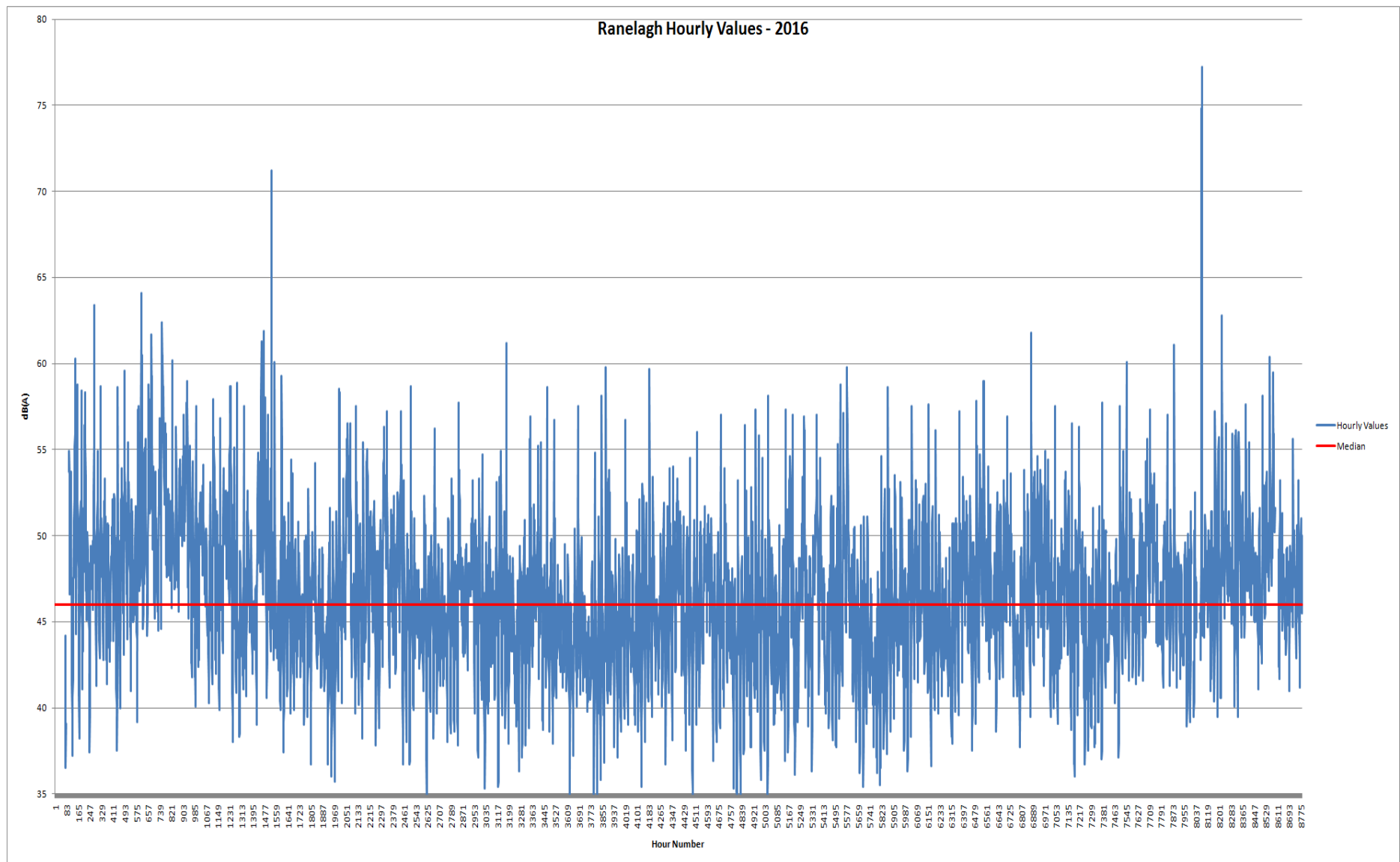


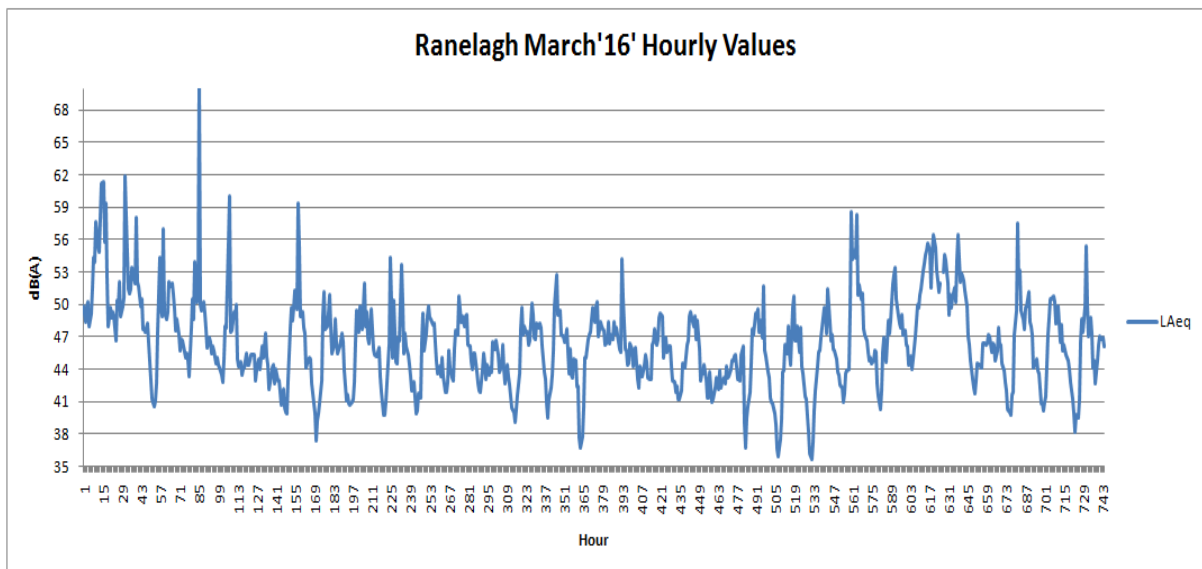
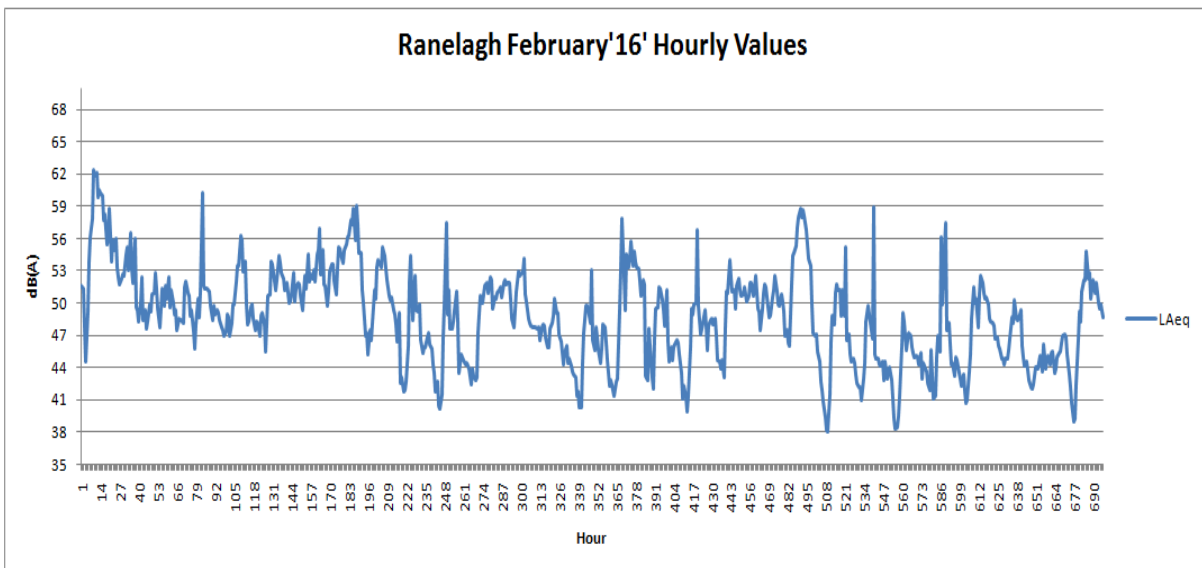
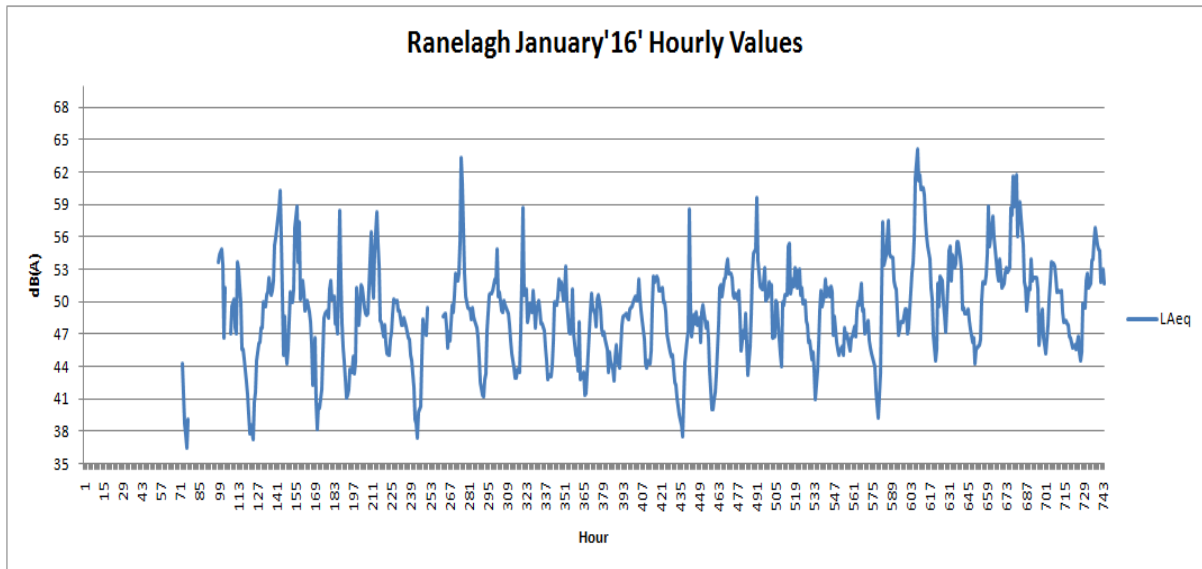


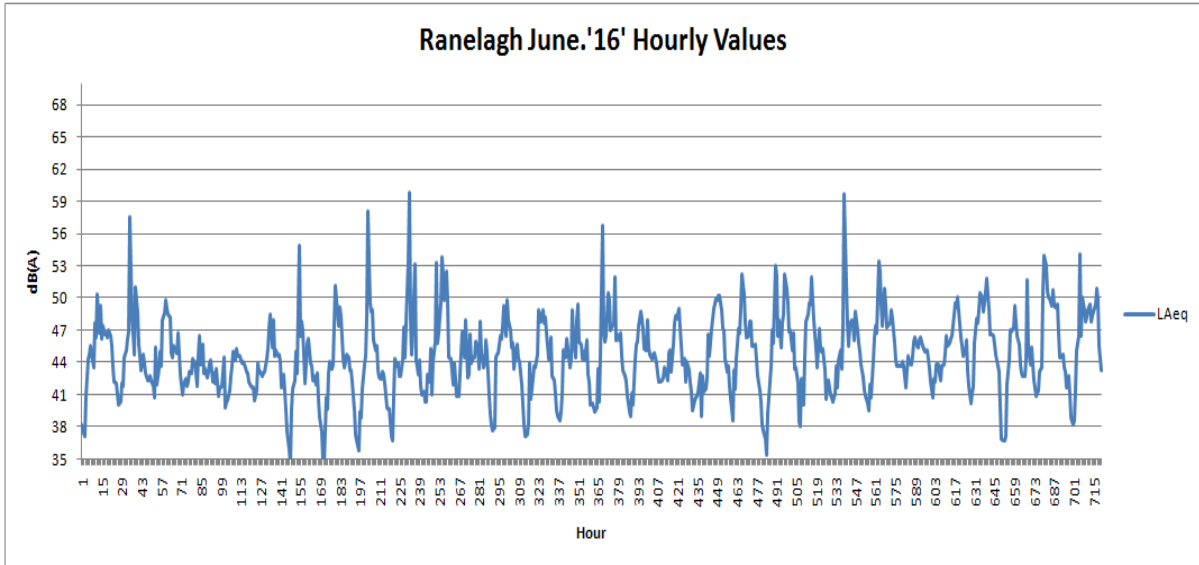
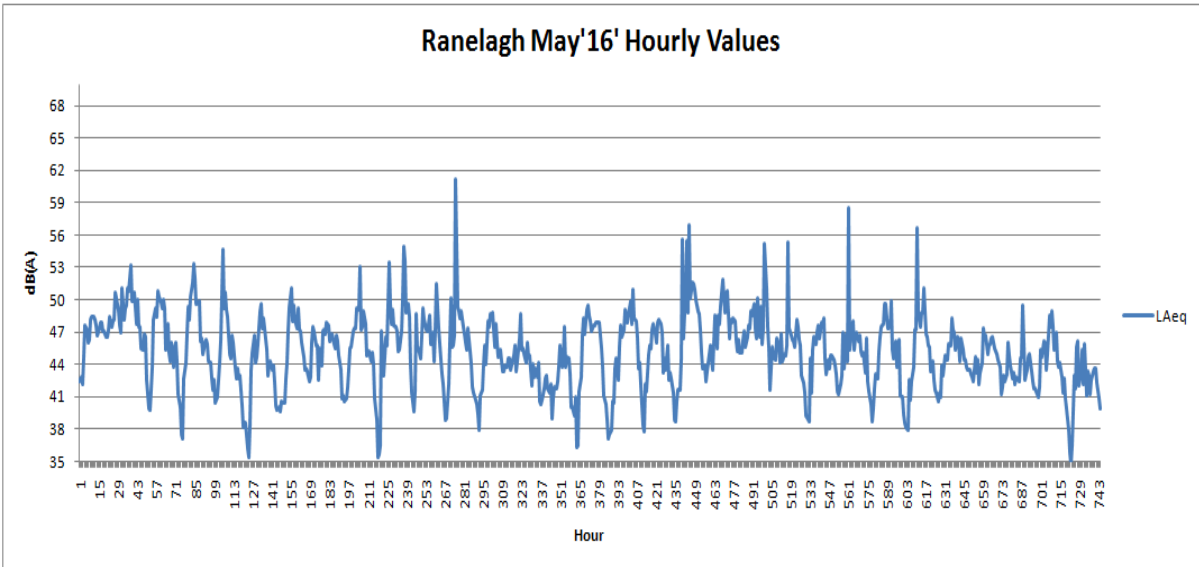
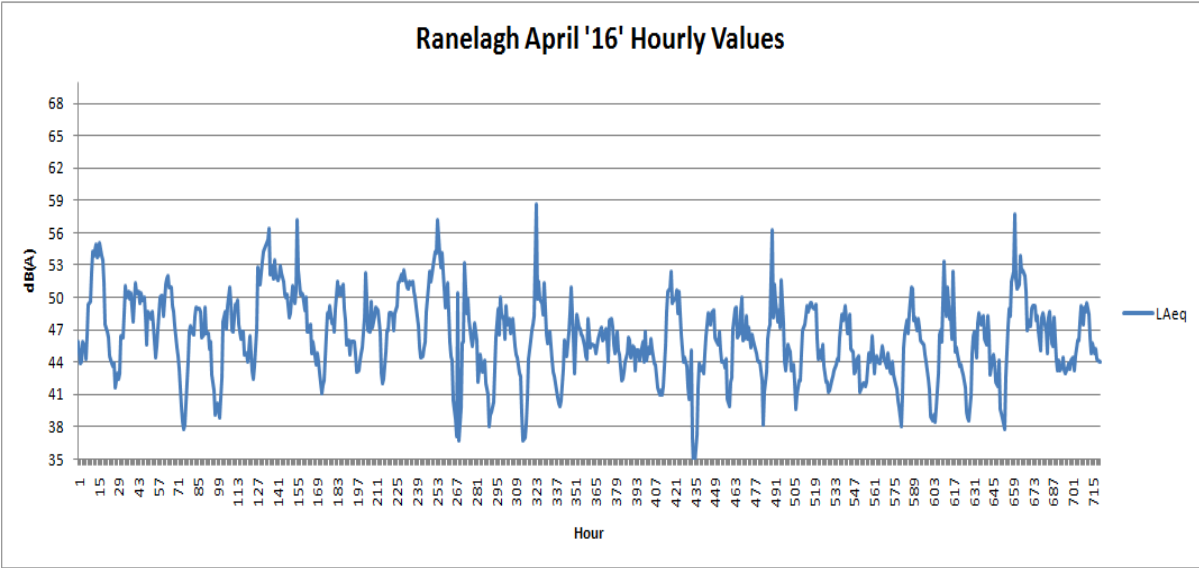


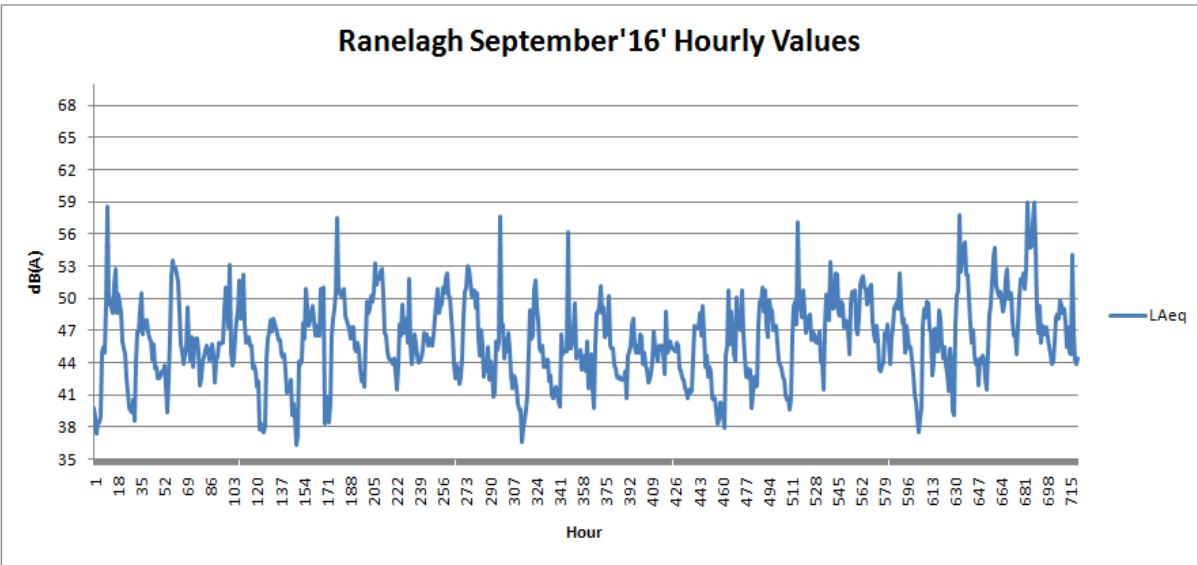
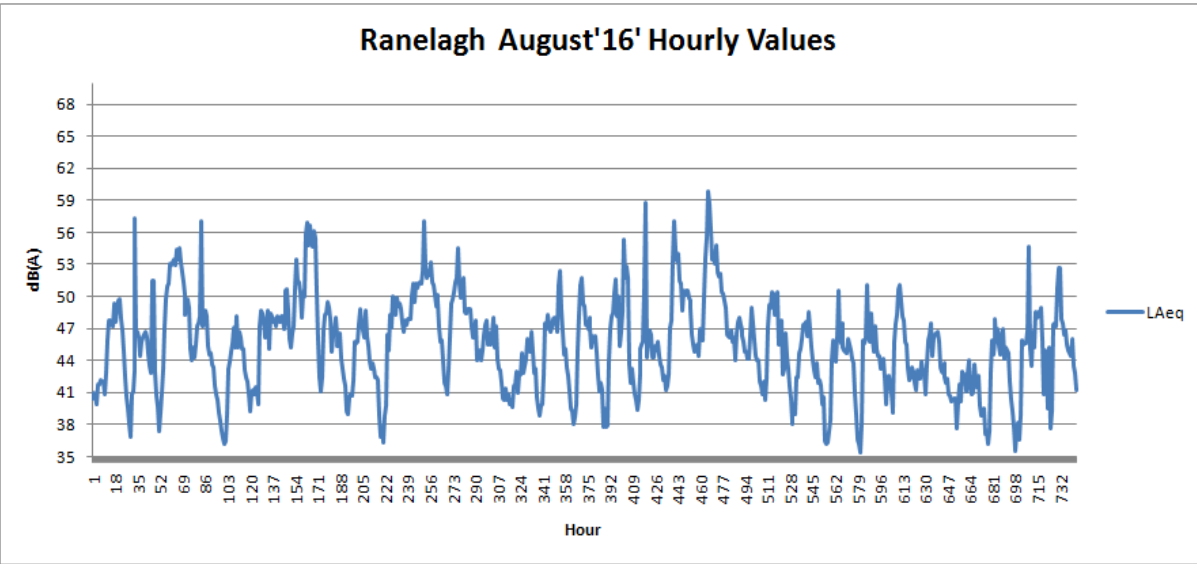
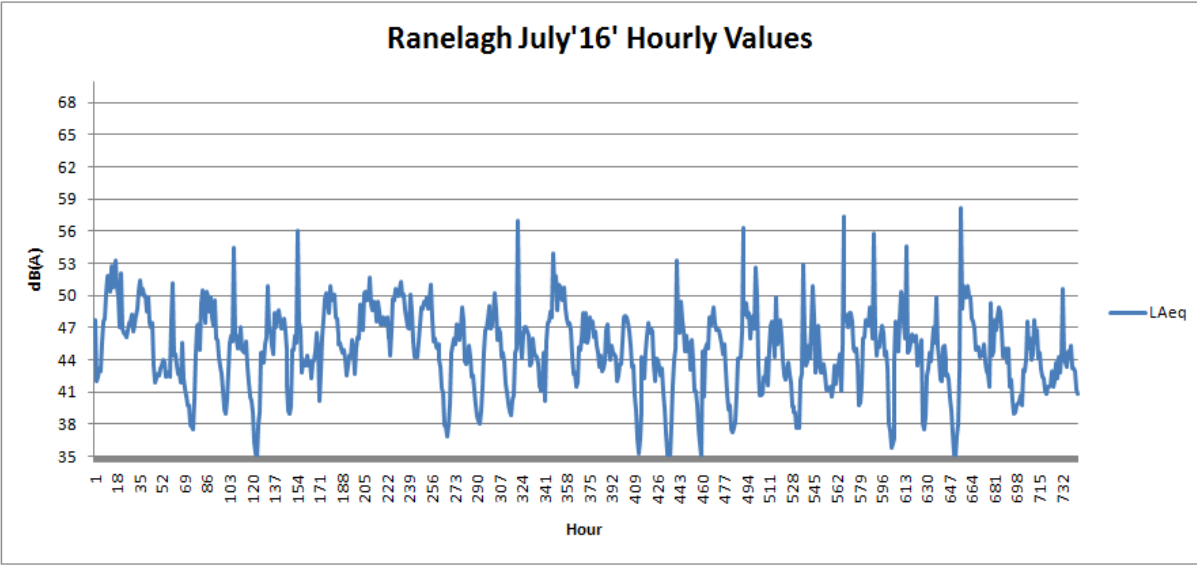
WOODSTOCK STOCK GARDENS
RANELAGH
DUBLIN 6

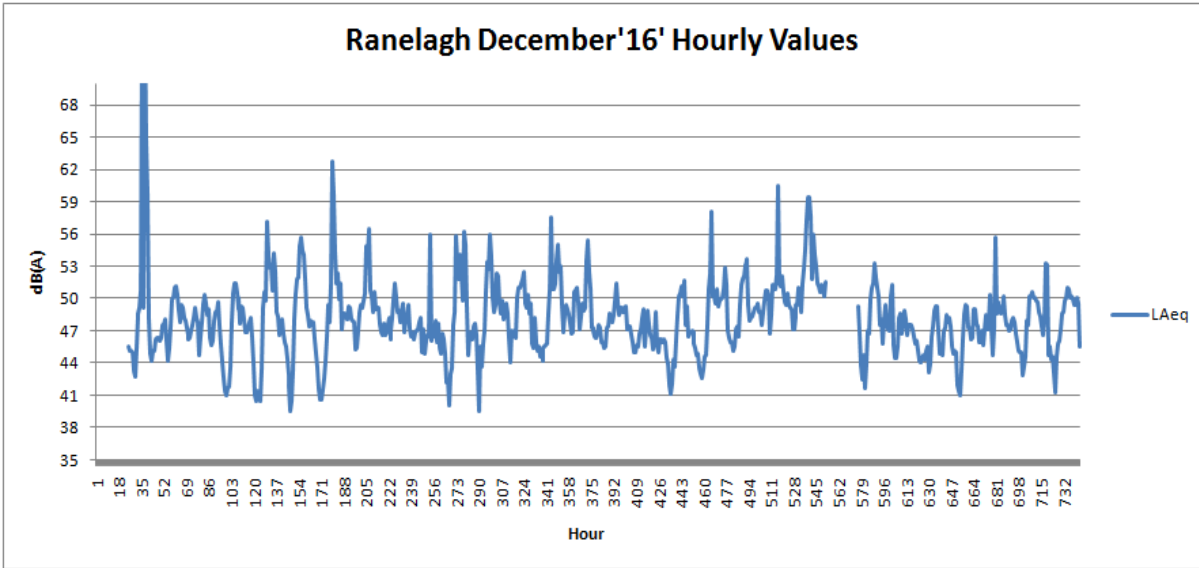
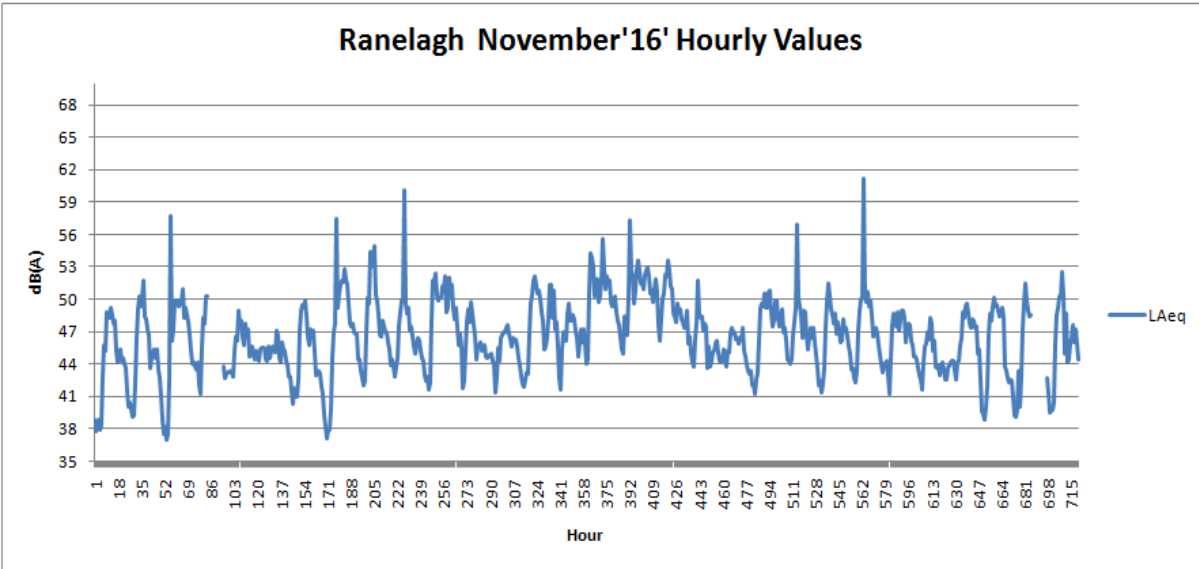
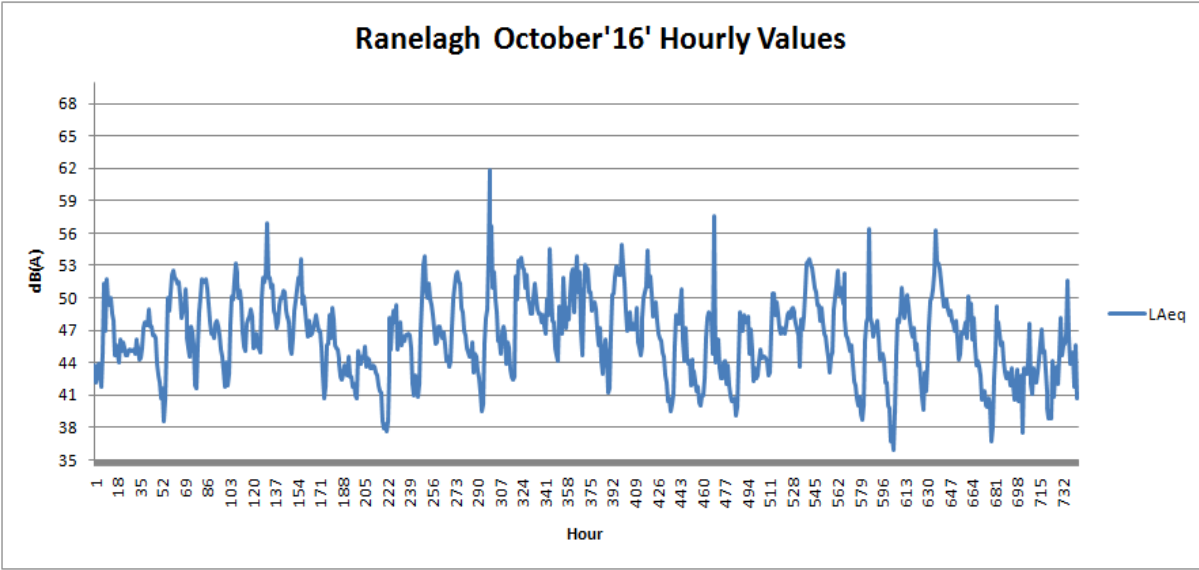




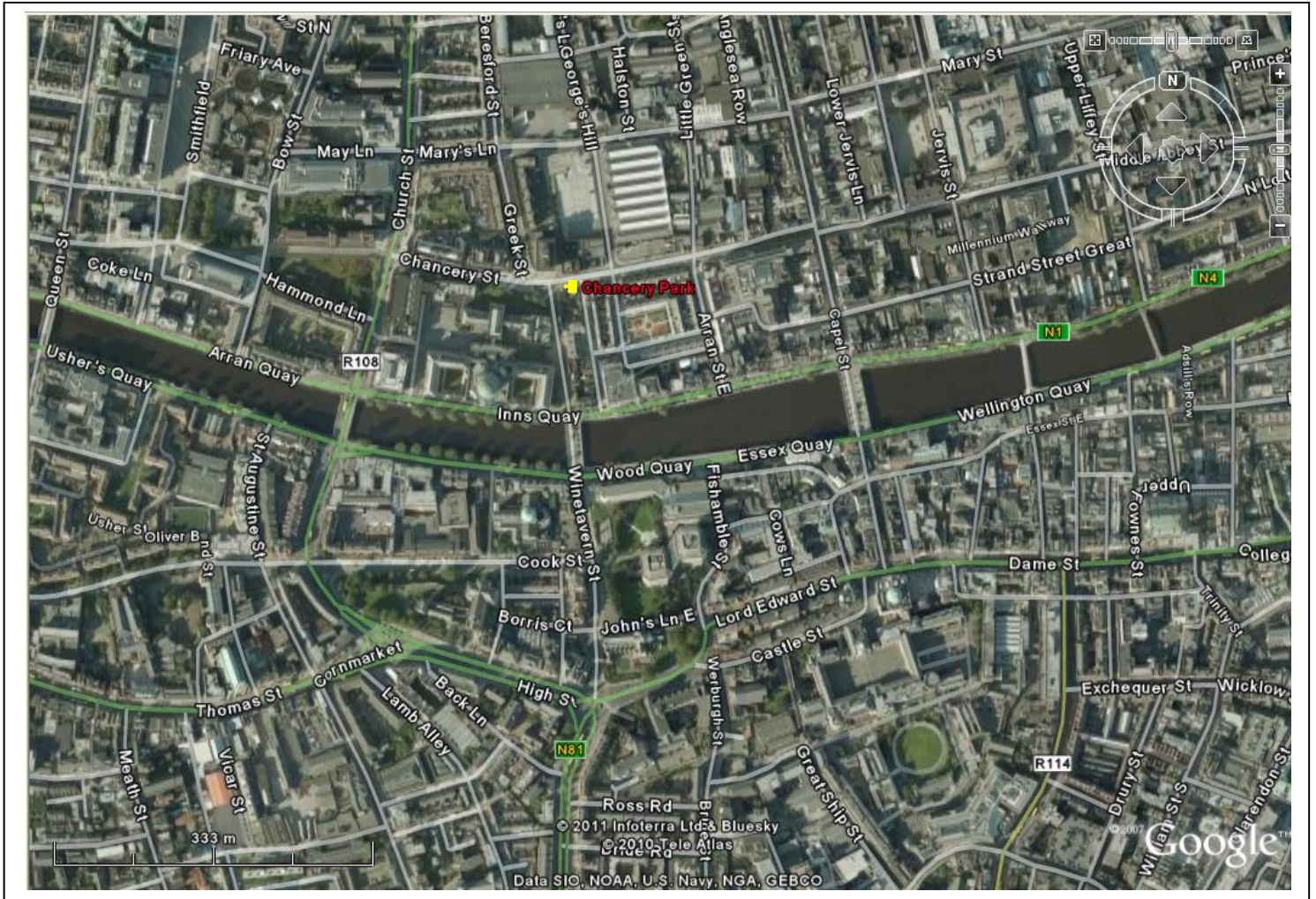


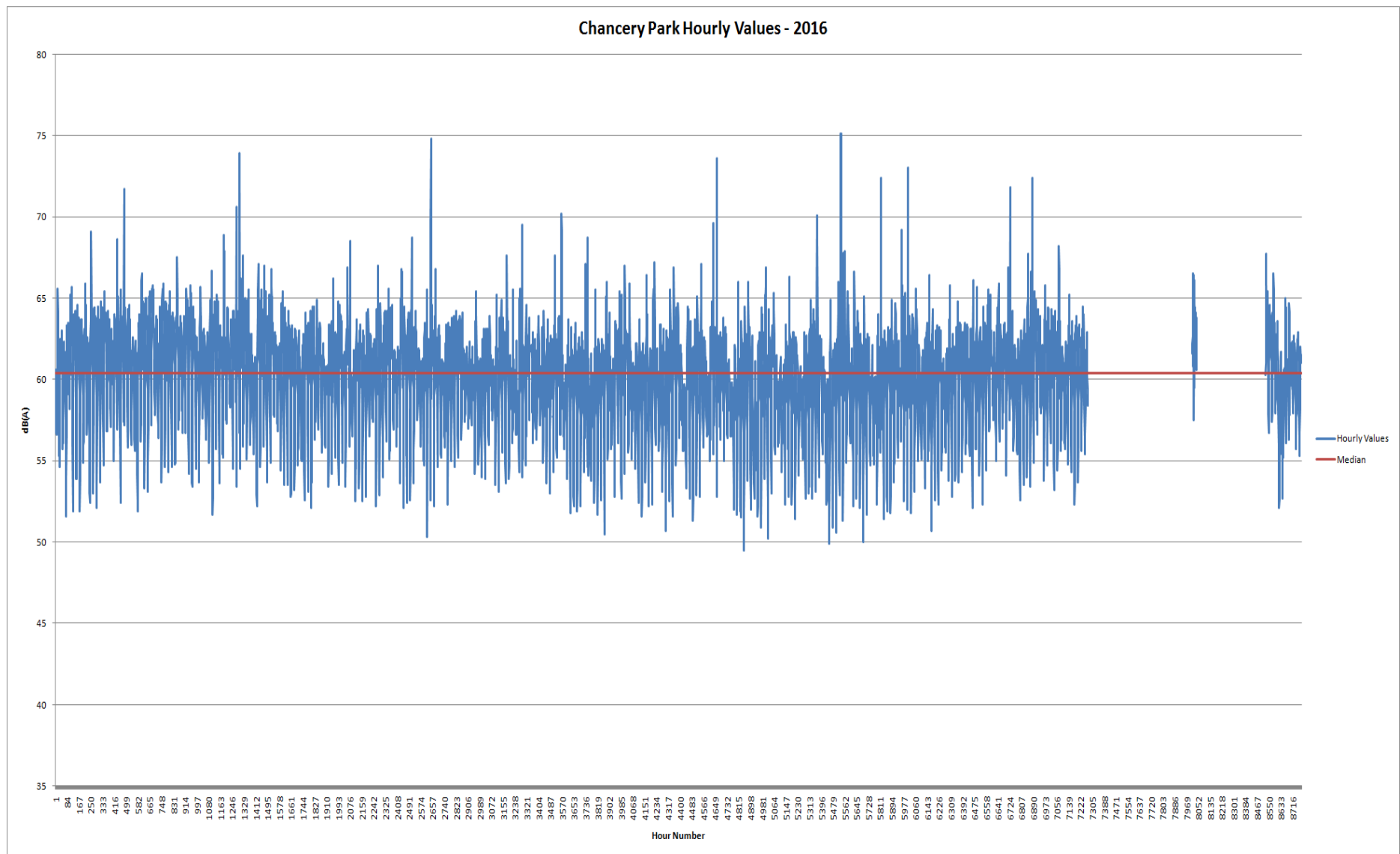


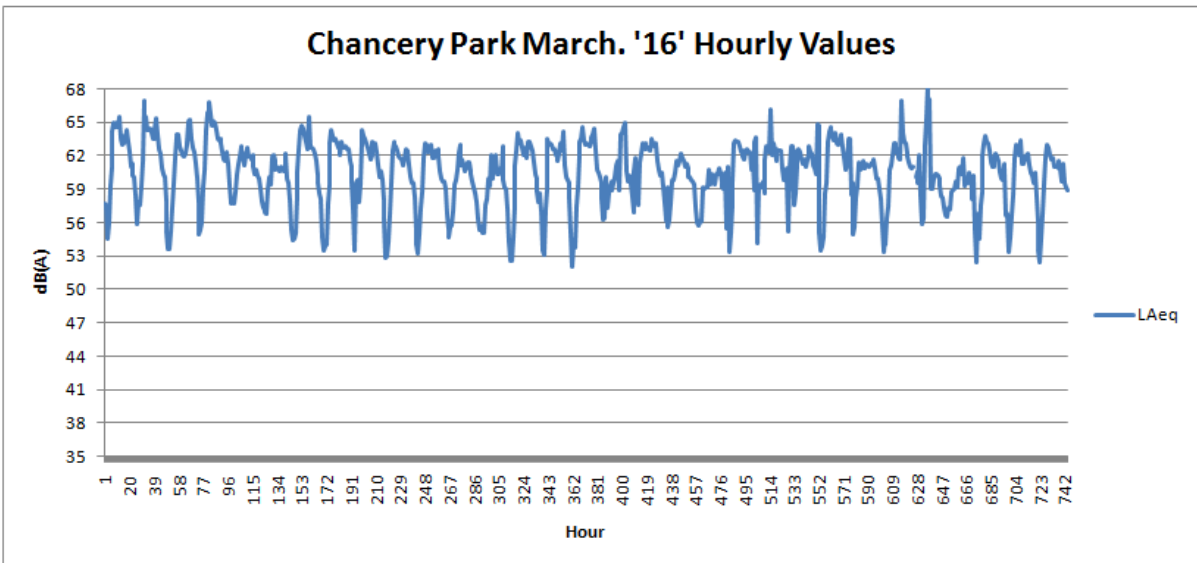
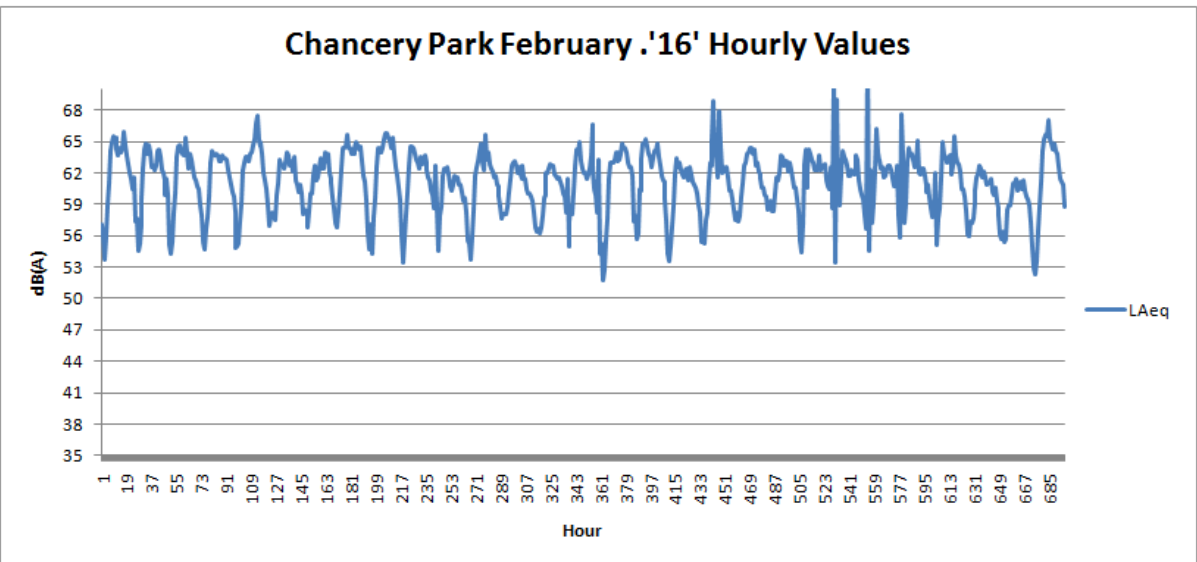
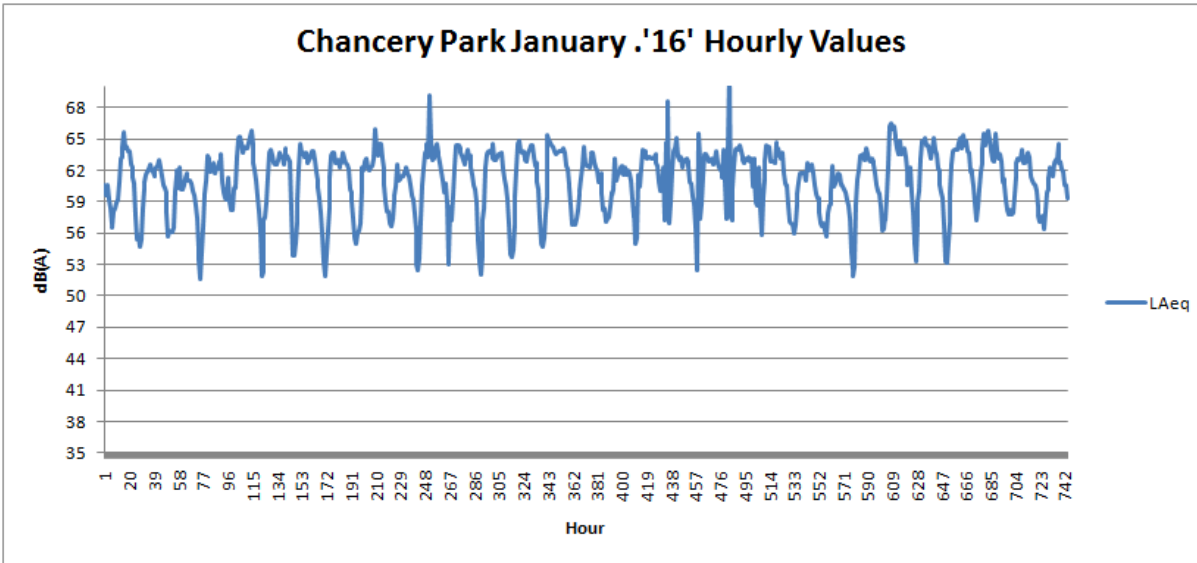


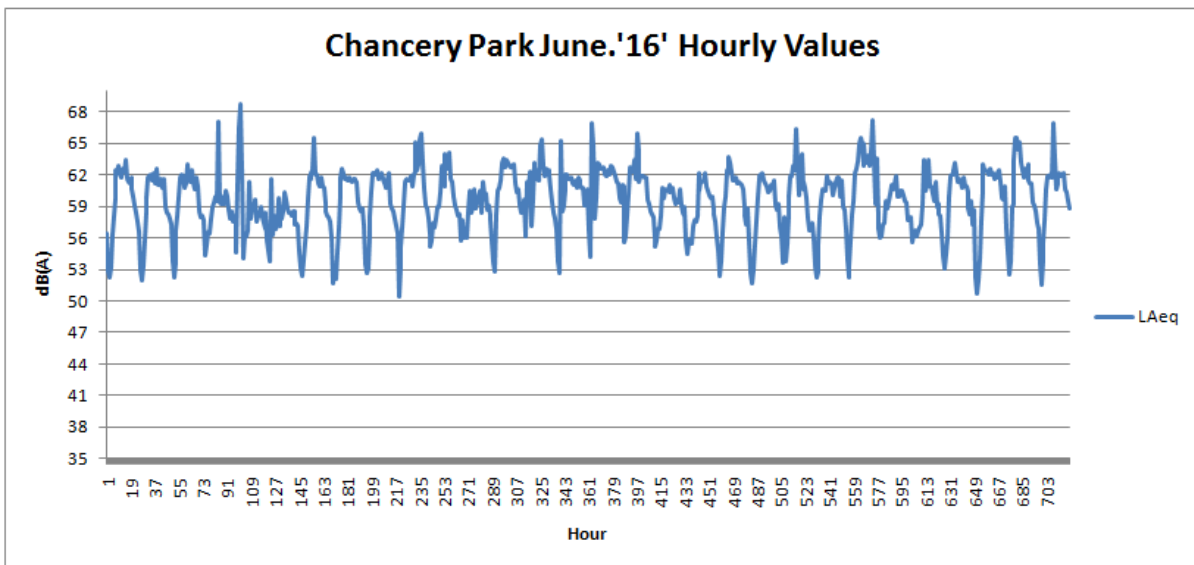
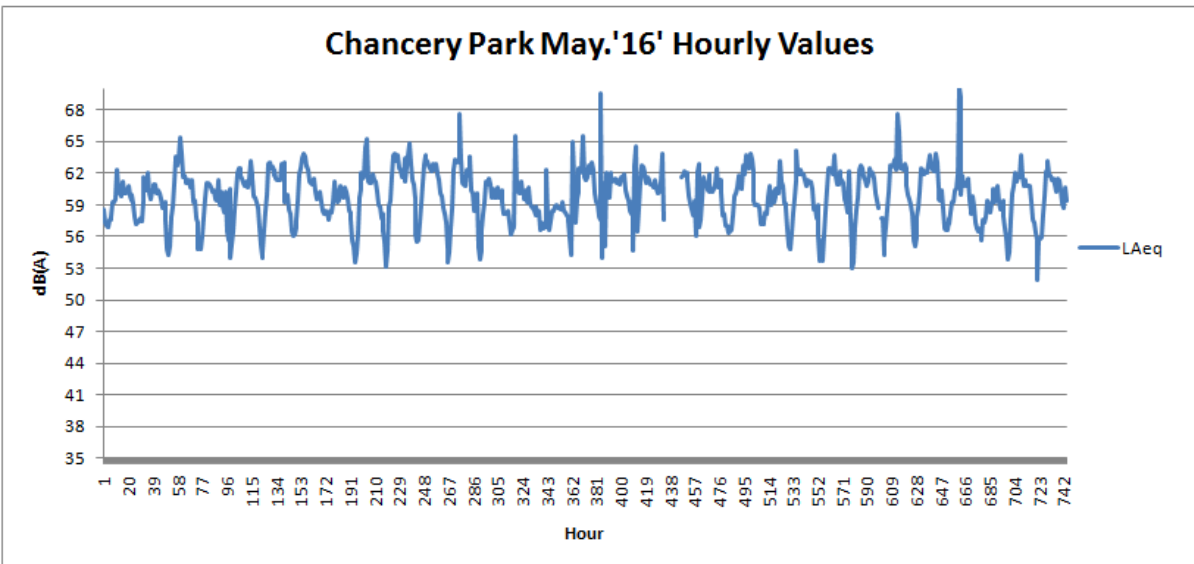
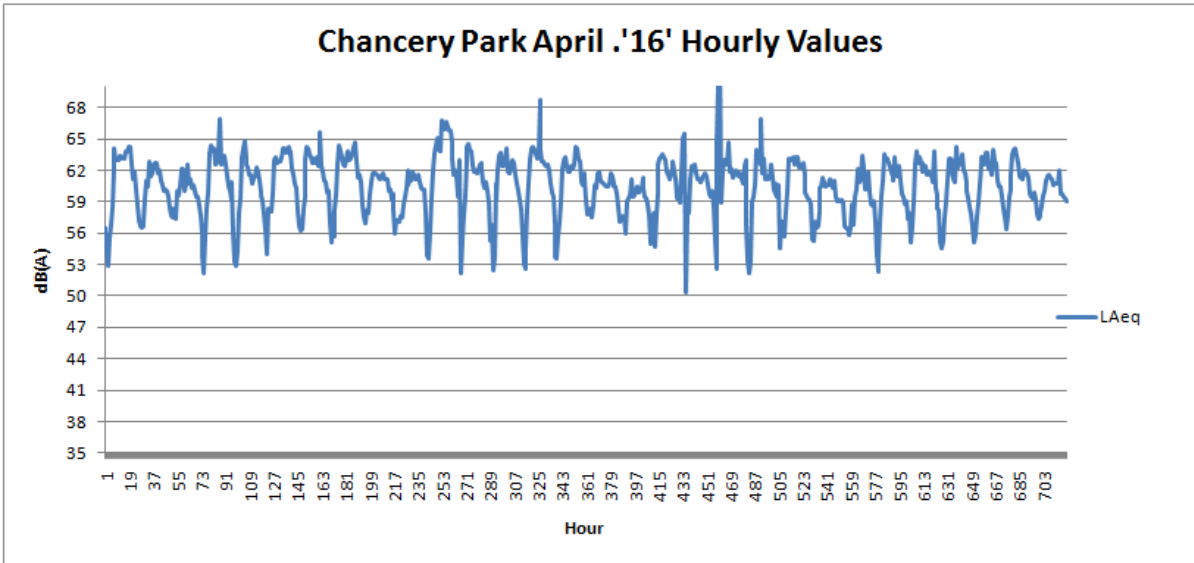


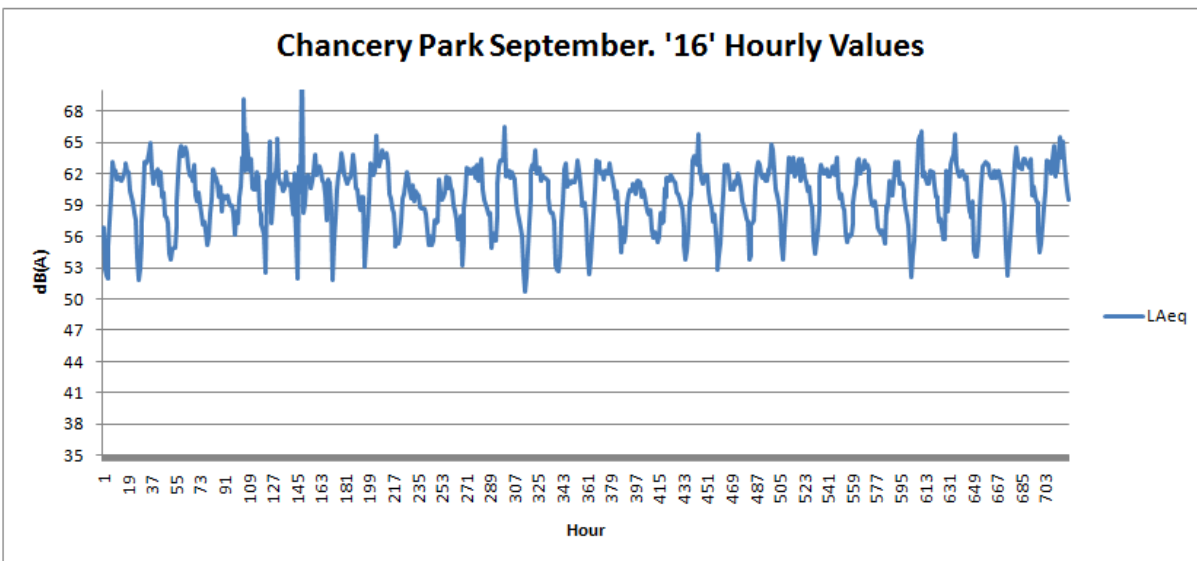
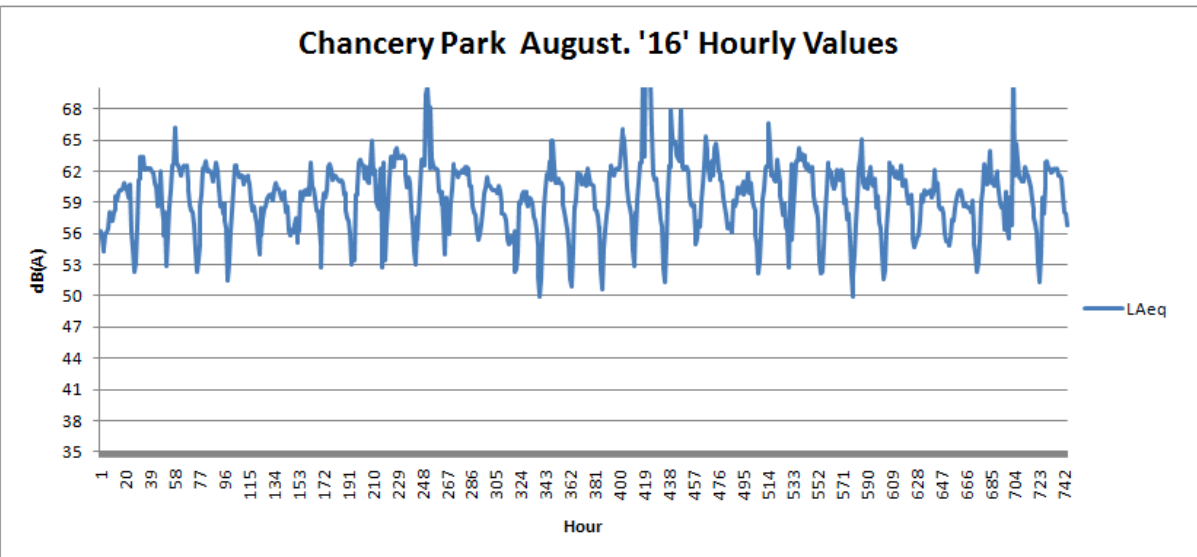
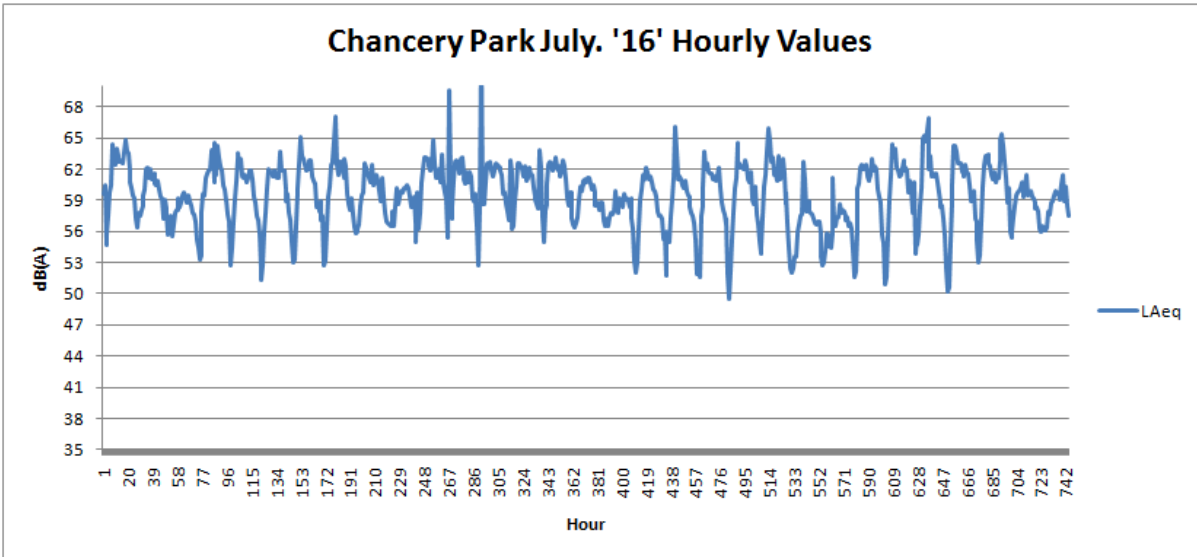
CHANCERY PARK
CHANCERY ST.
DUBLIN 1

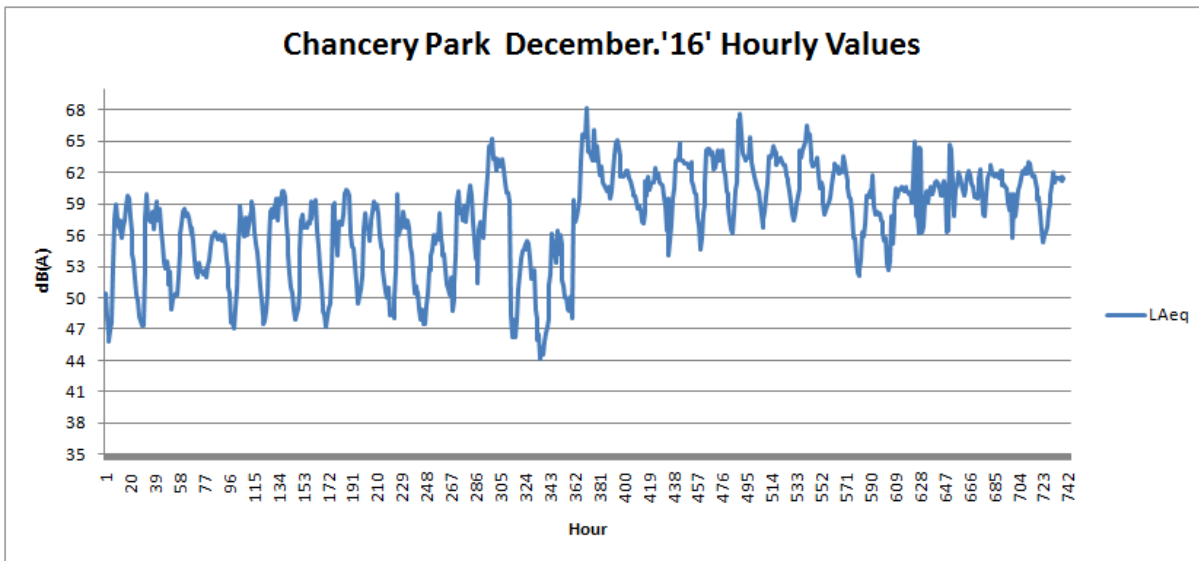
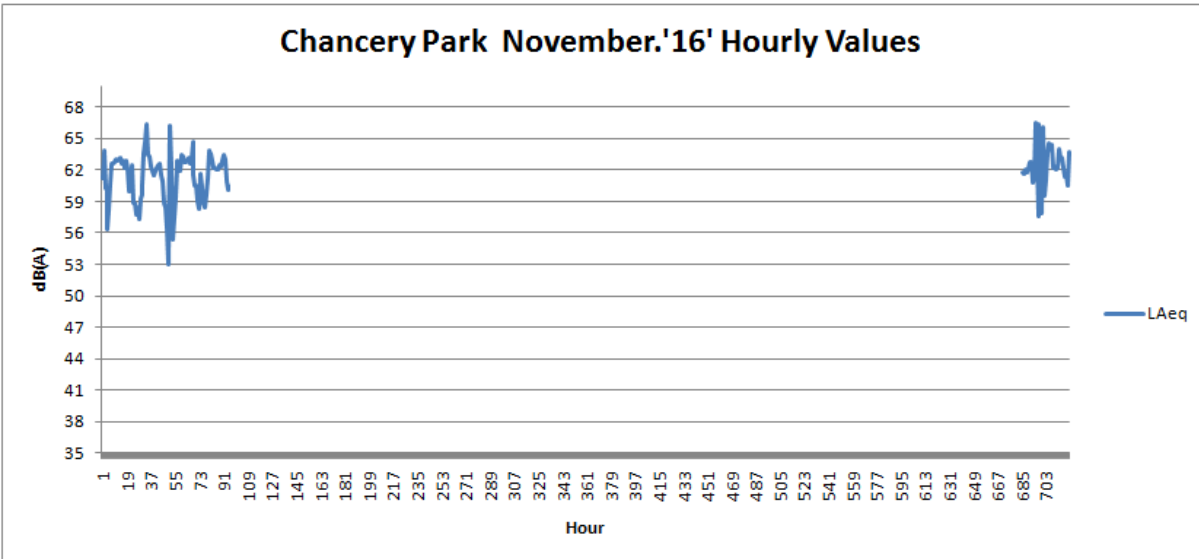
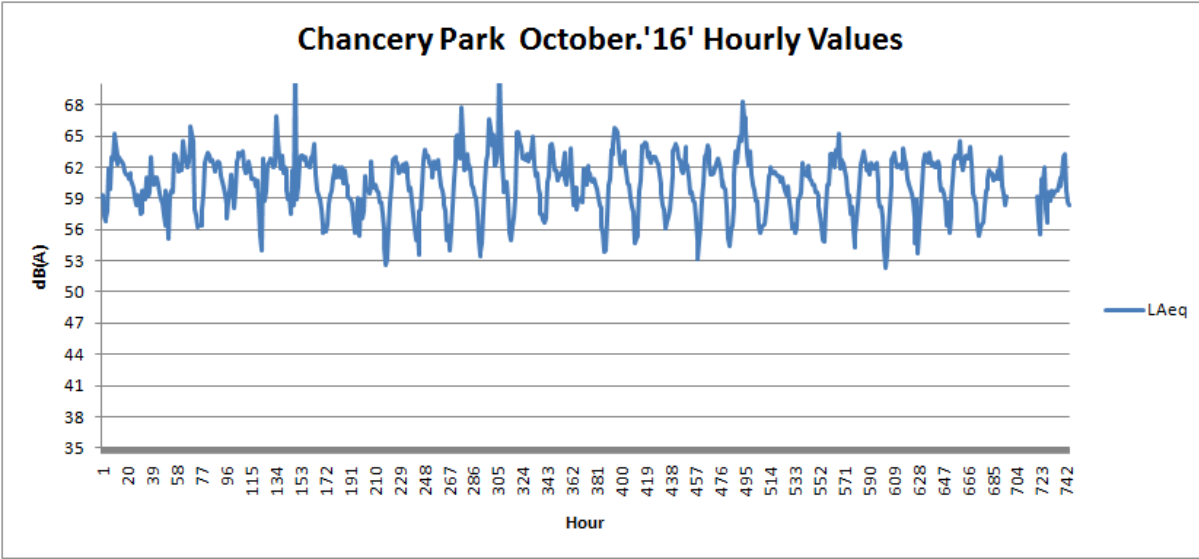






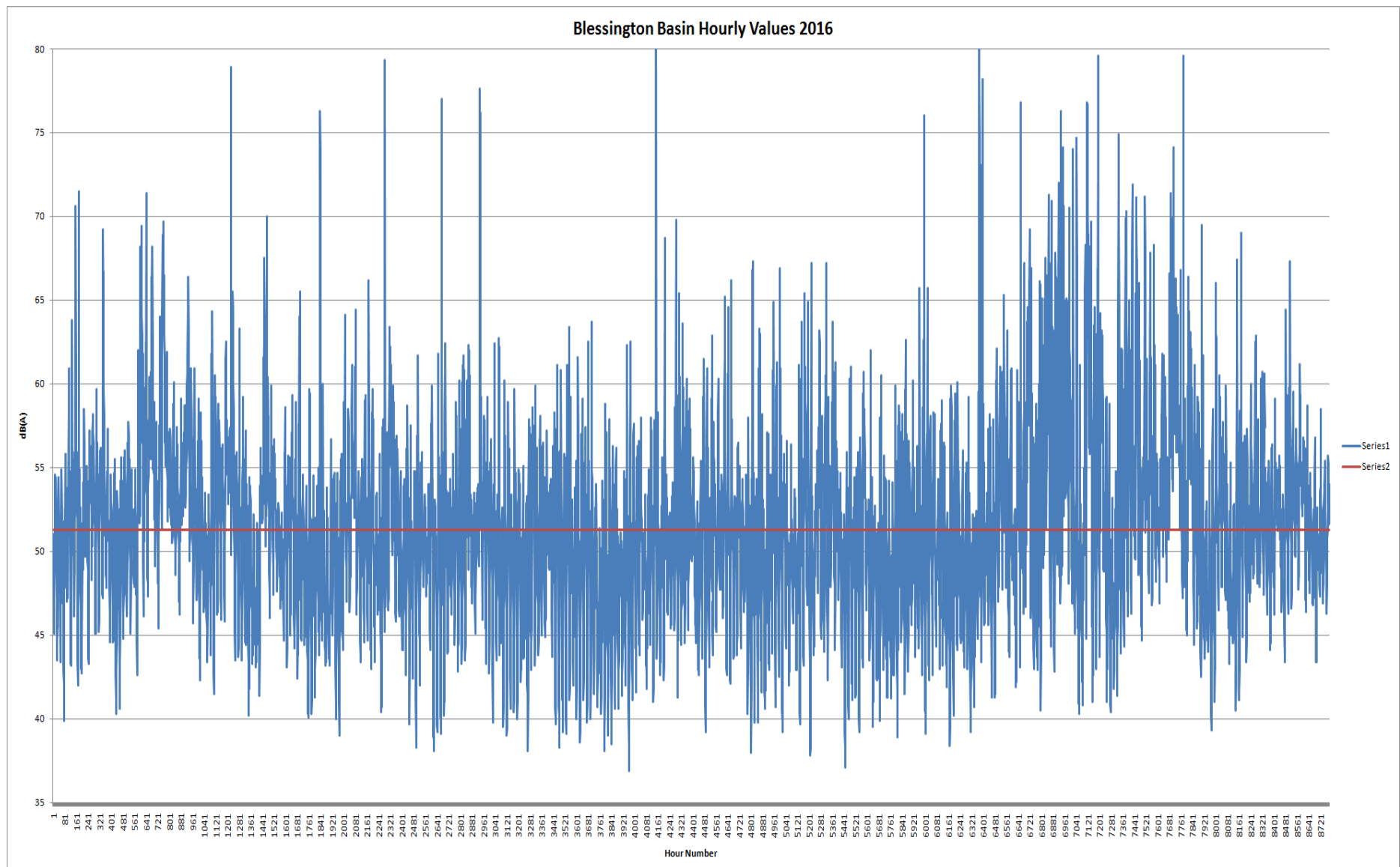


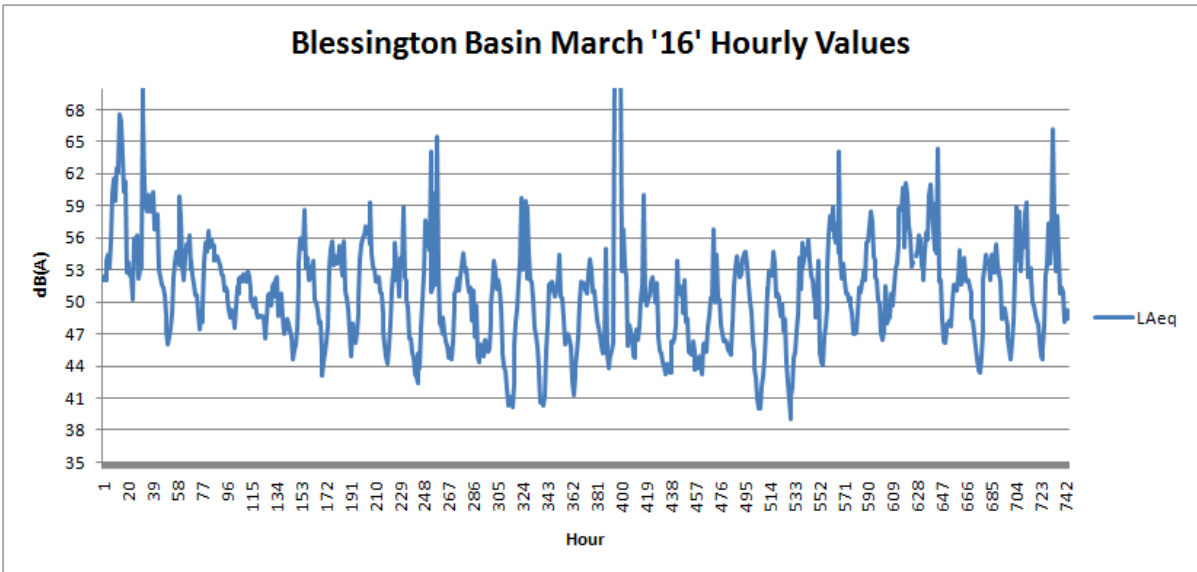
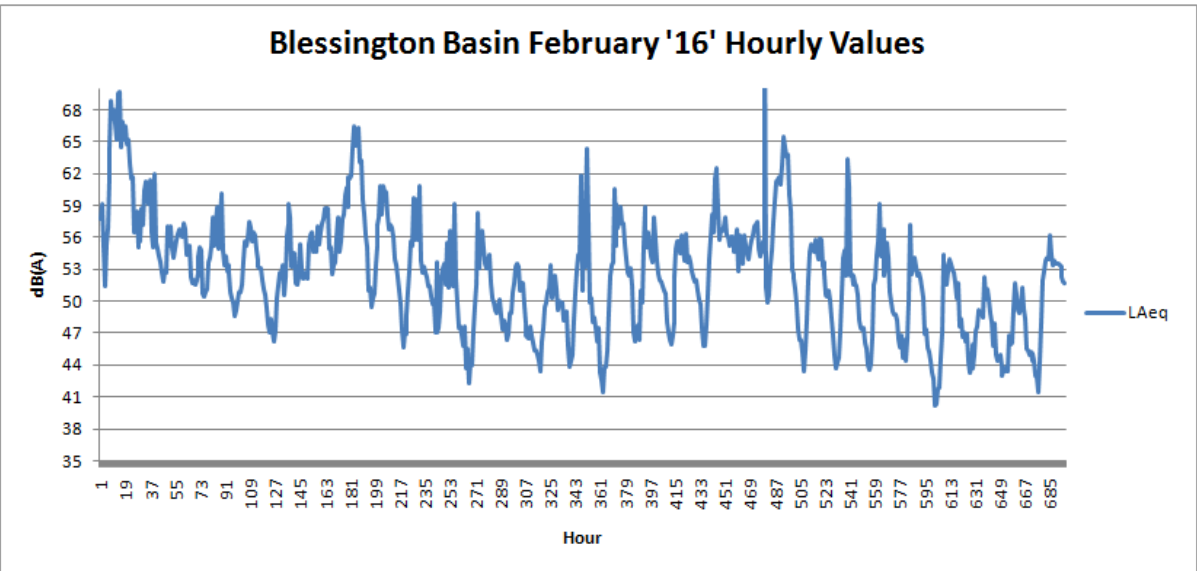
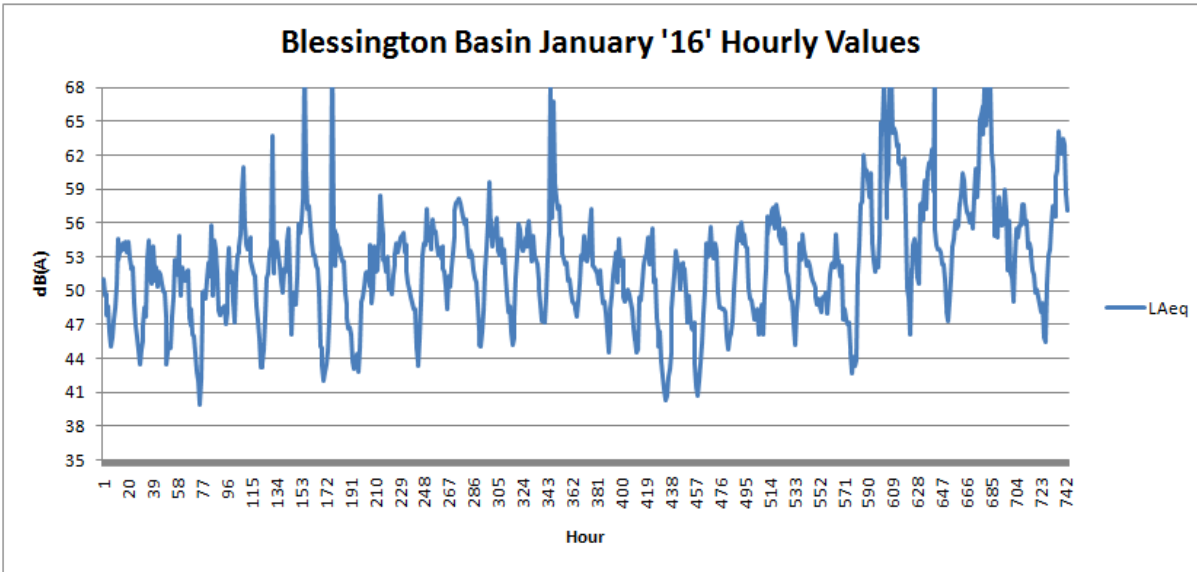


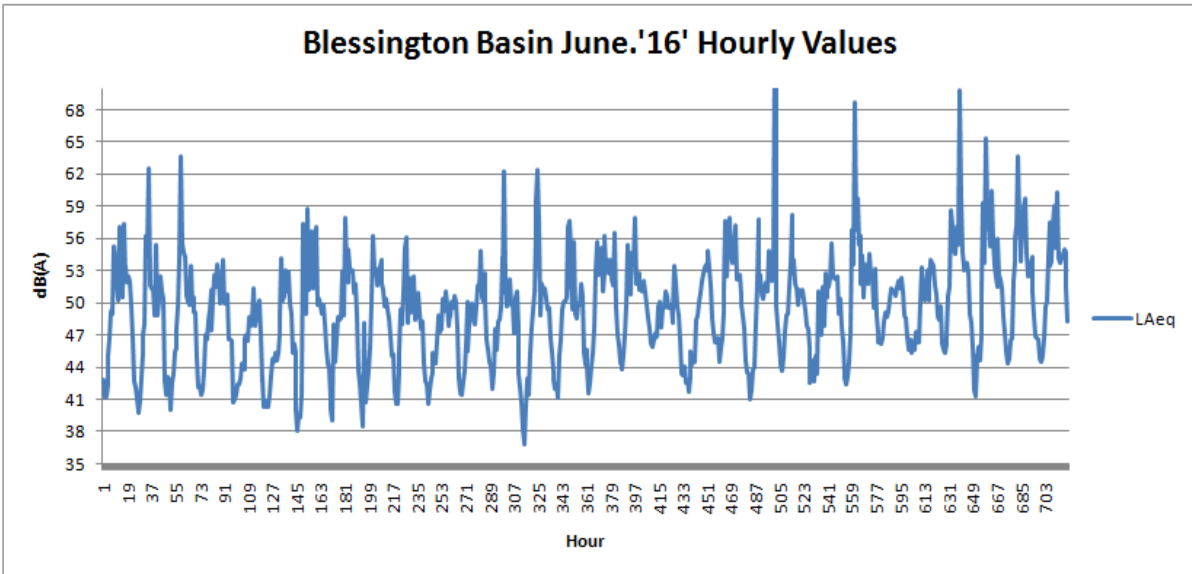
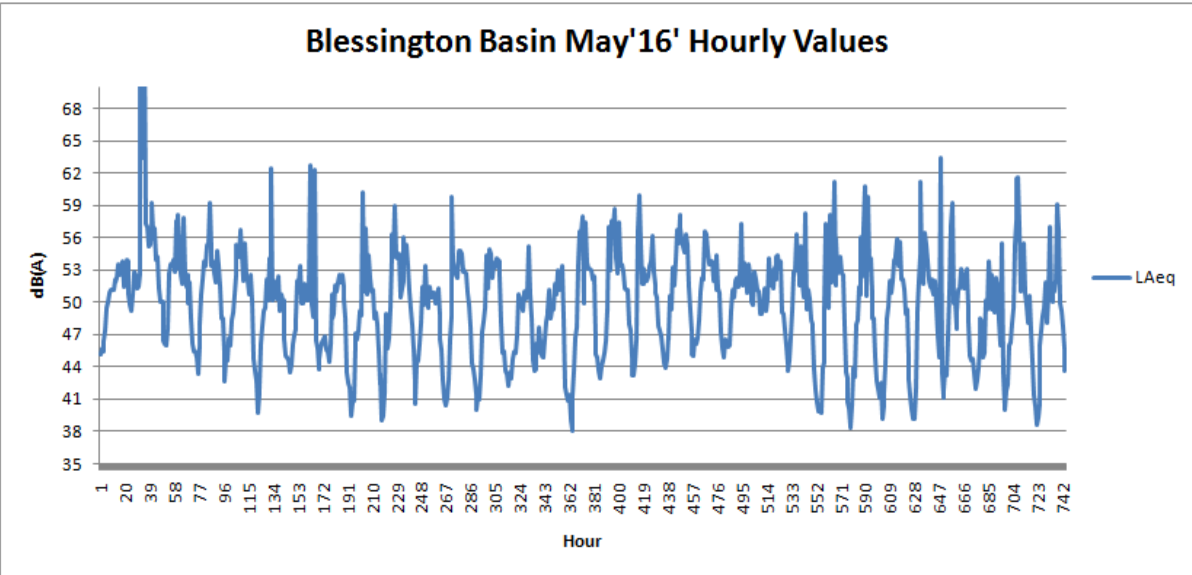
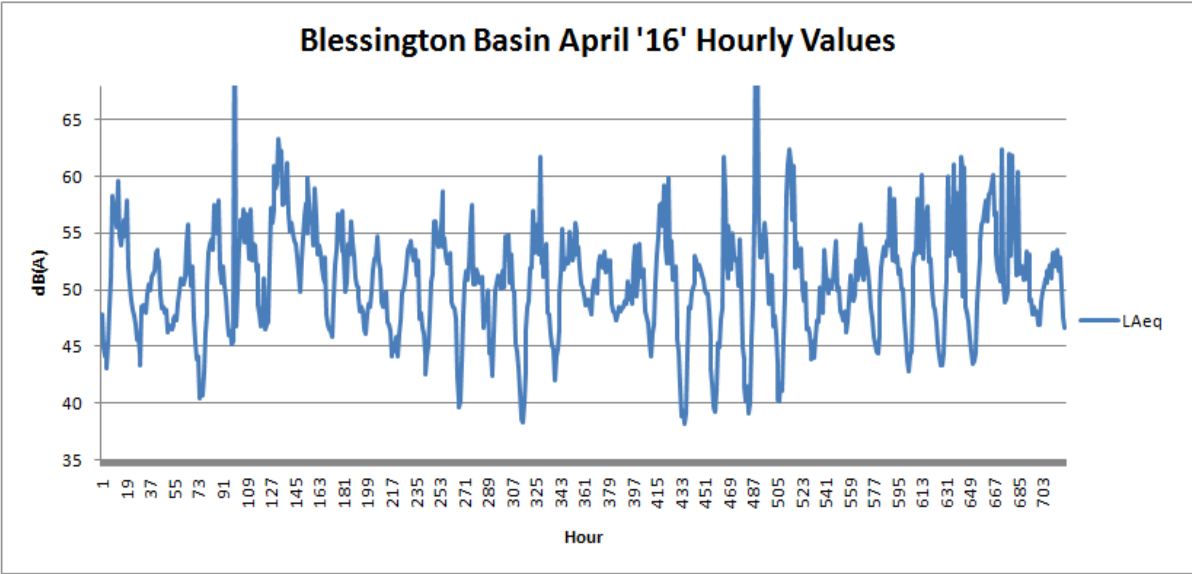


Blessington Basin
Blessington St.
DUBLIN 1

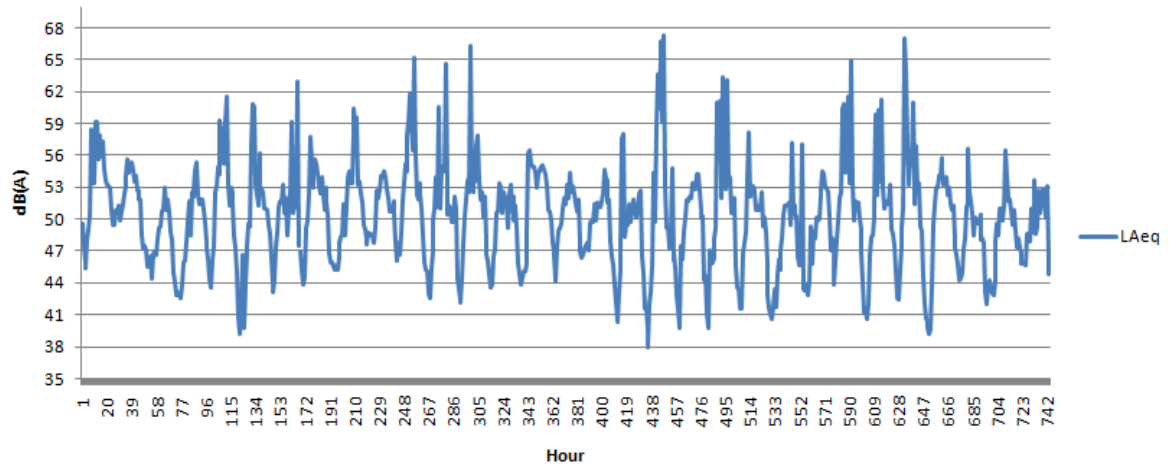




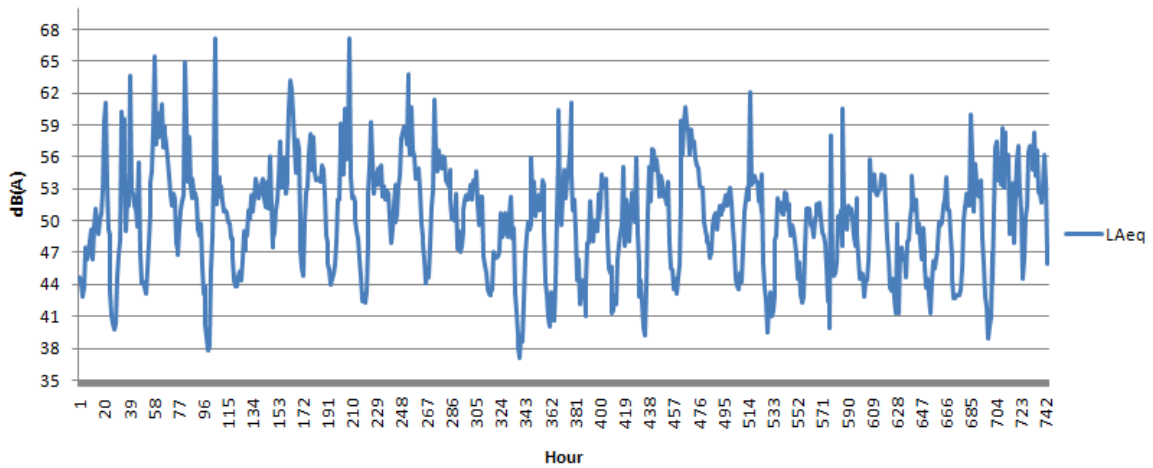




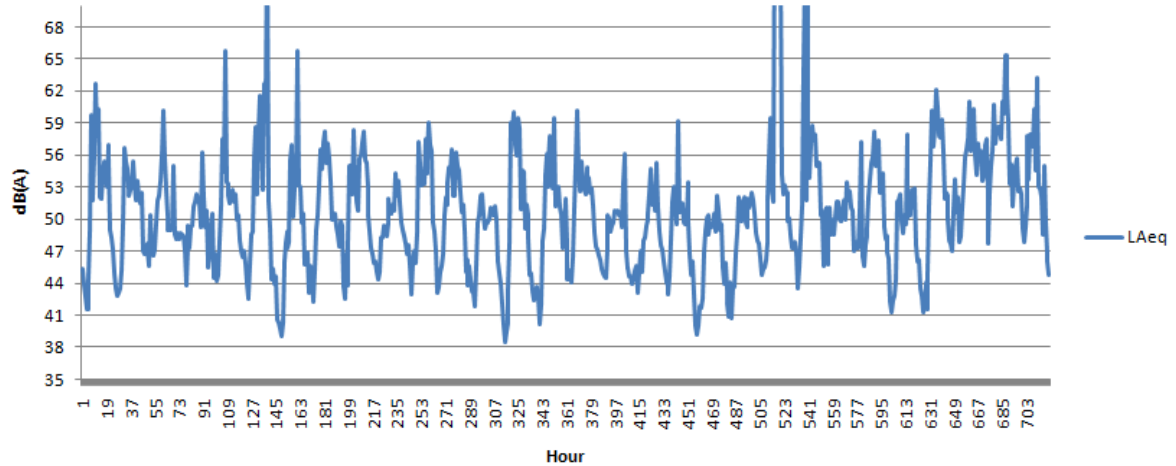
Blessington Basin July'16' Hourly Values

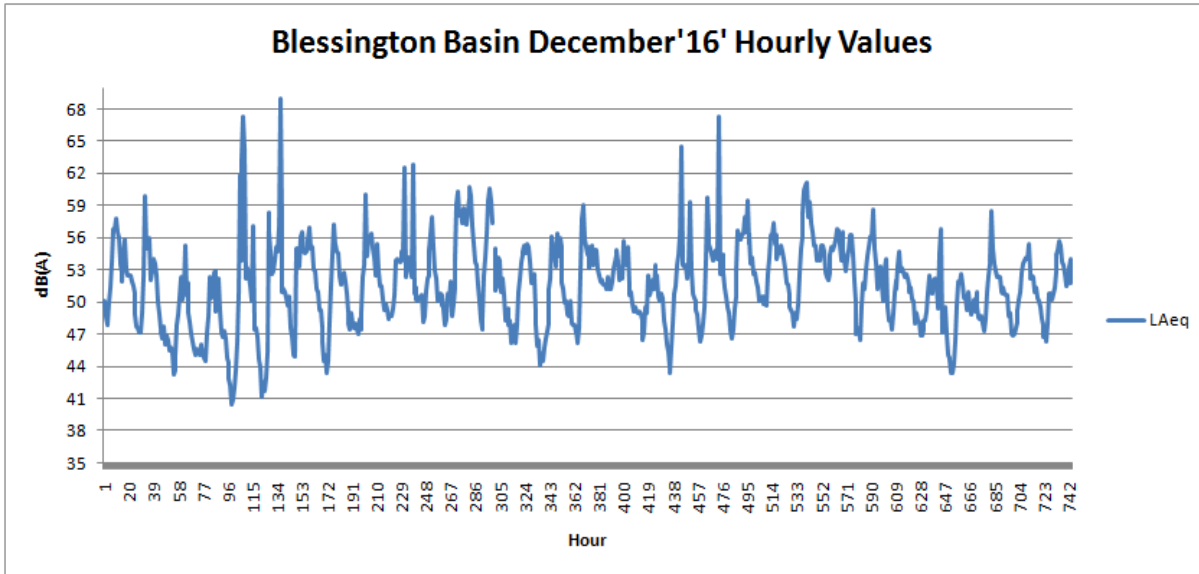
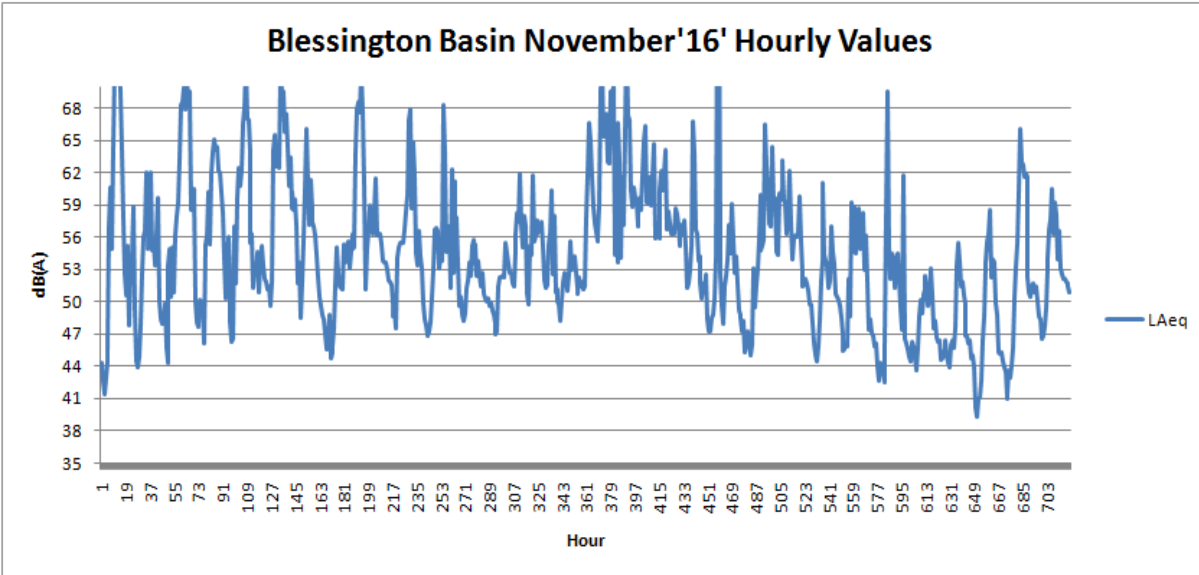
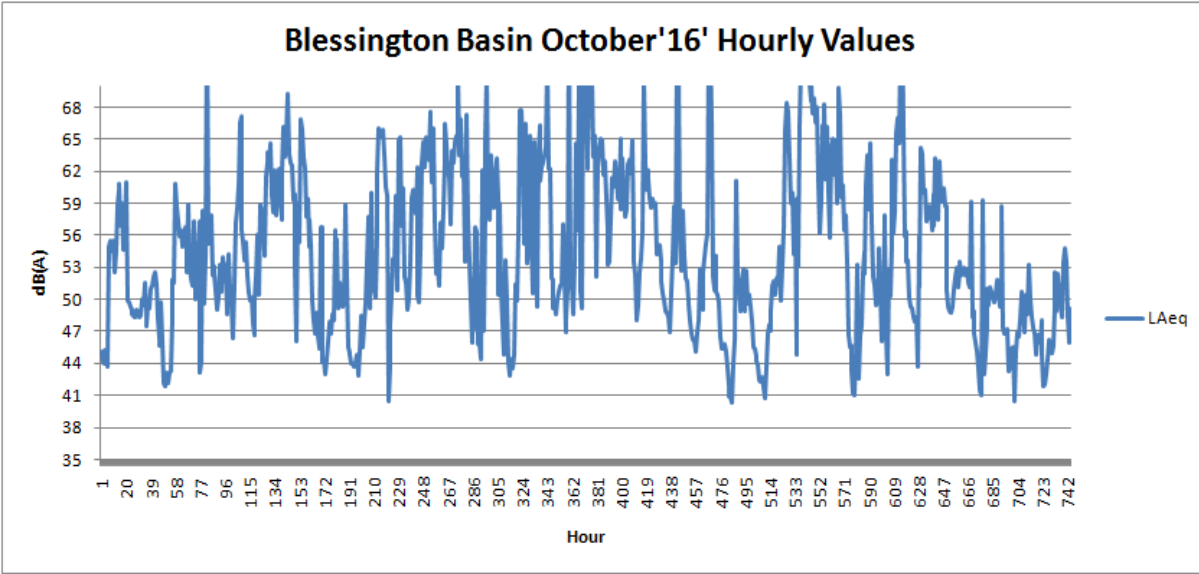


Blessington Basin August'16' Hourly Values

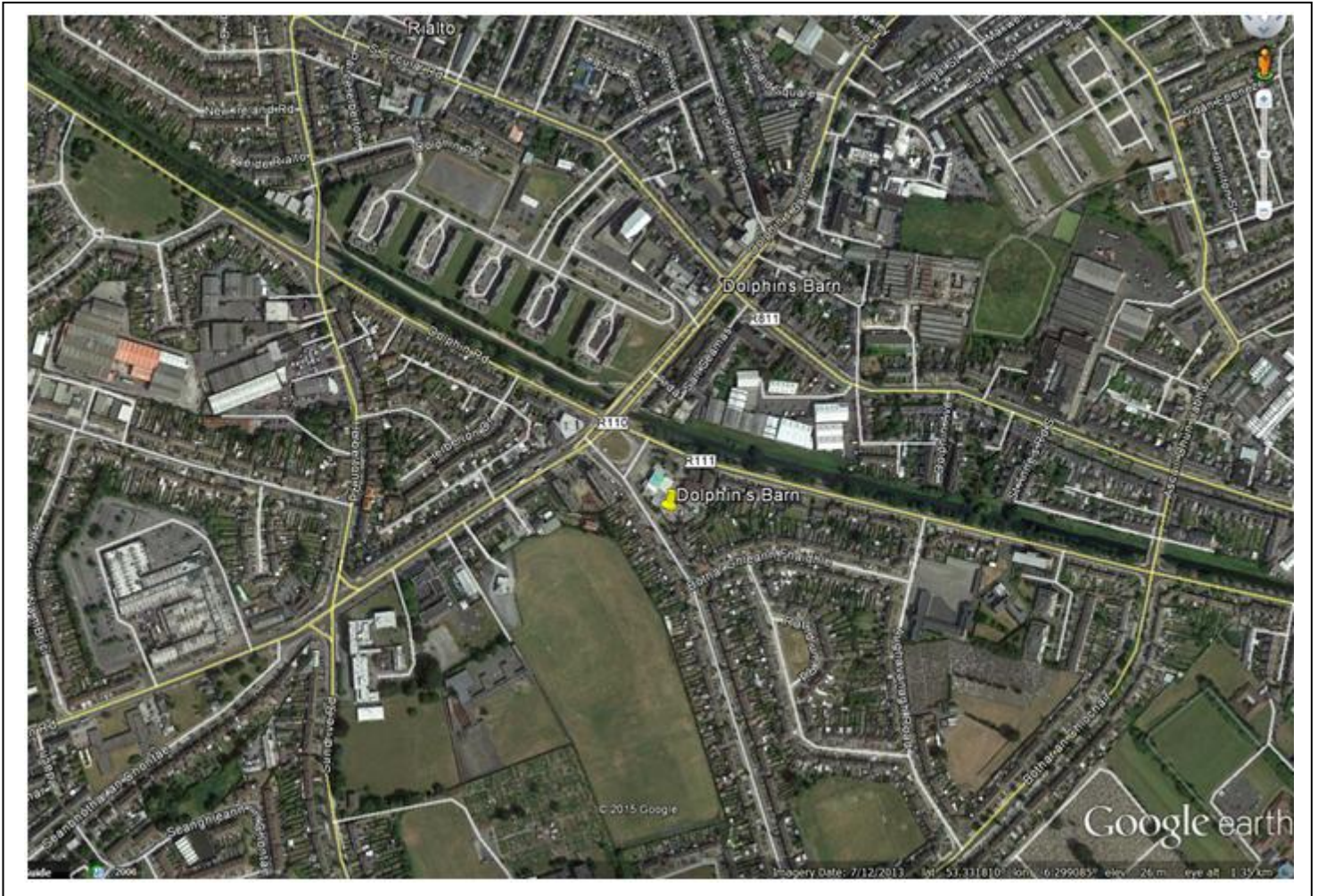


Blessington Basin September'16' Hourly Values

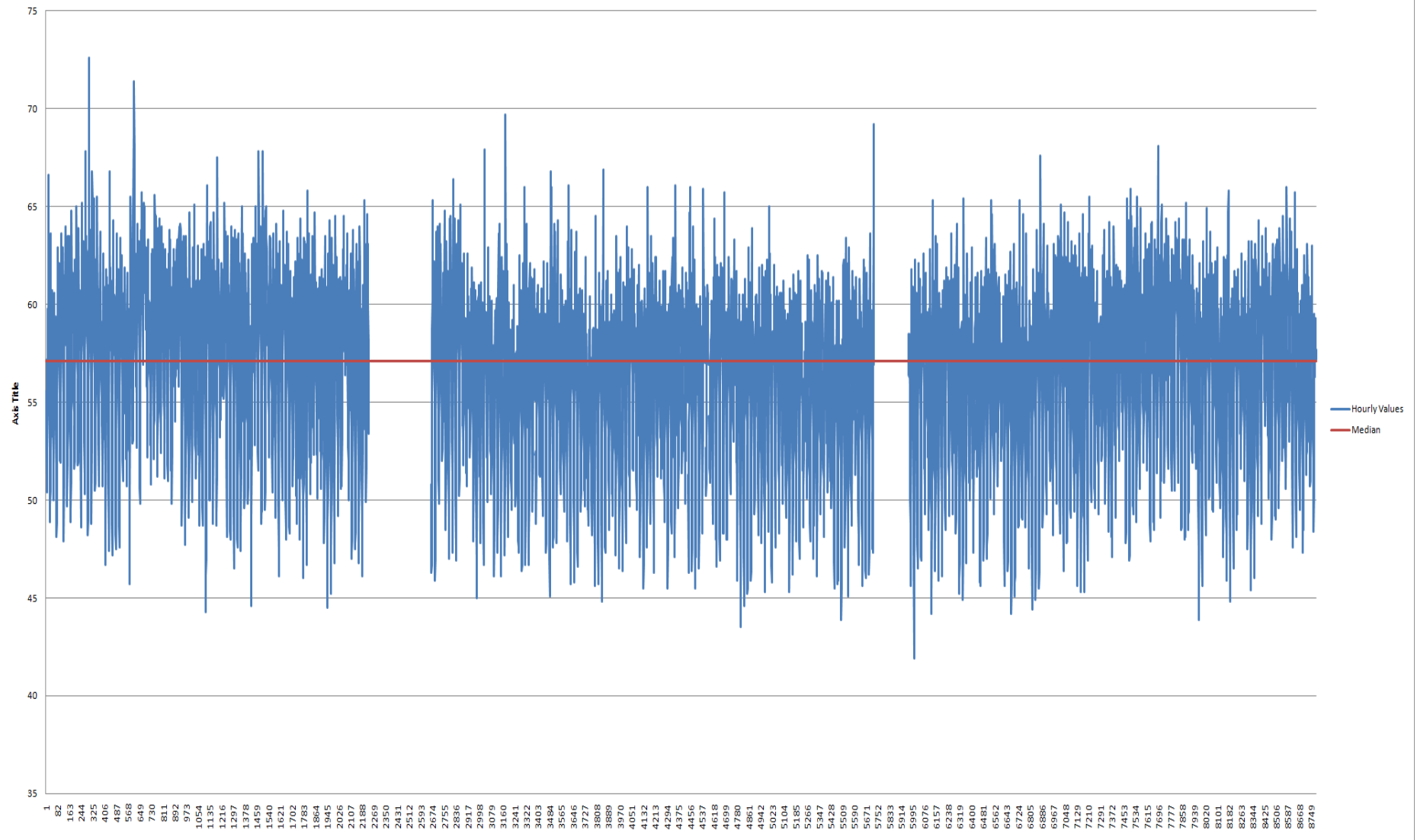


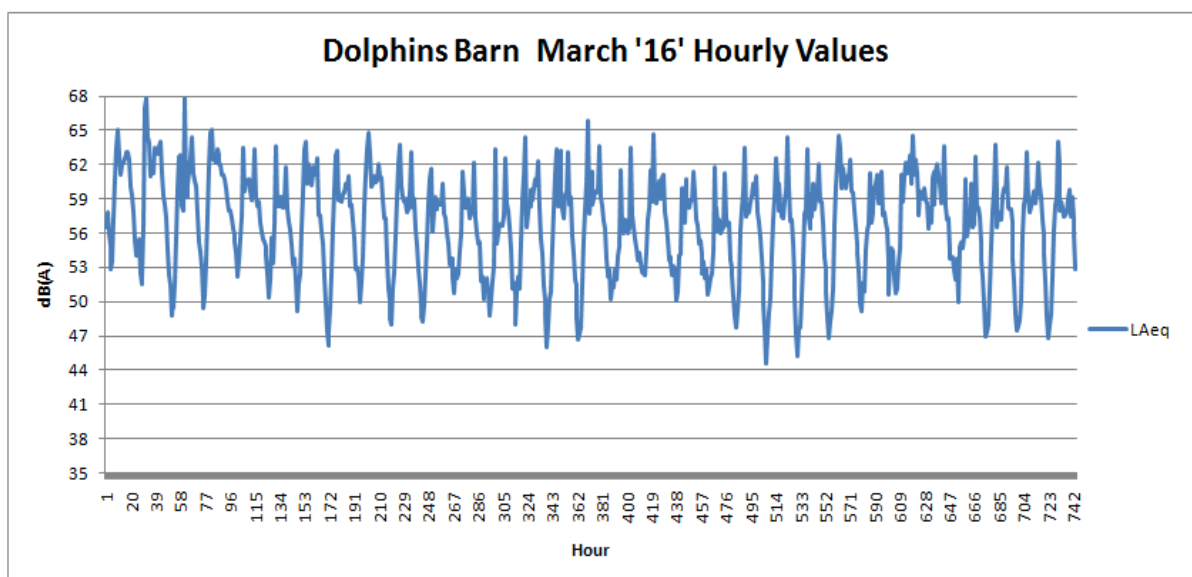
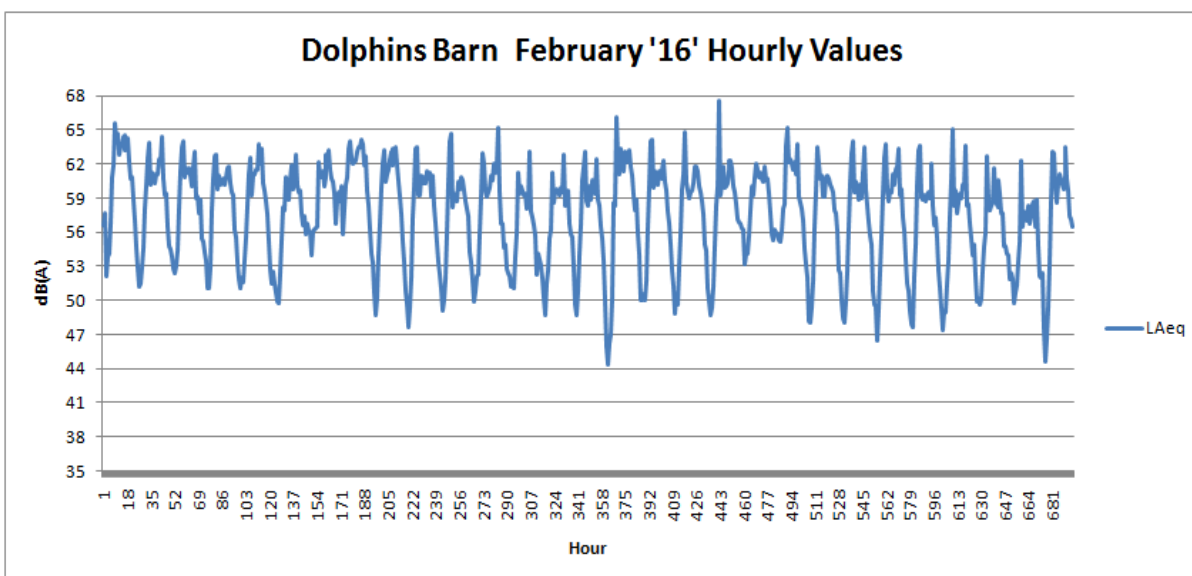
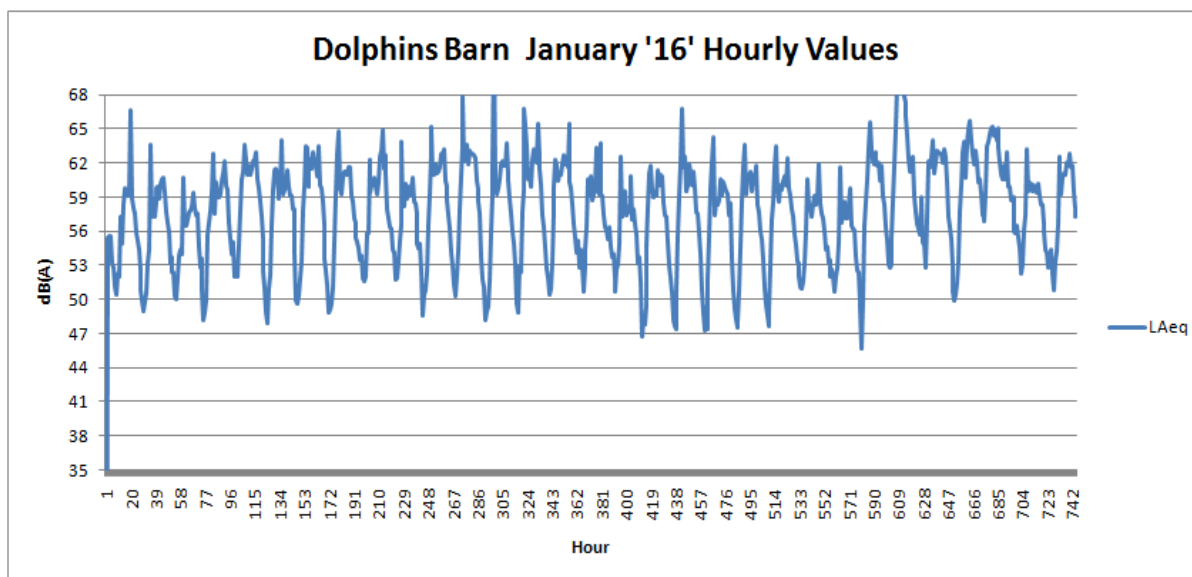


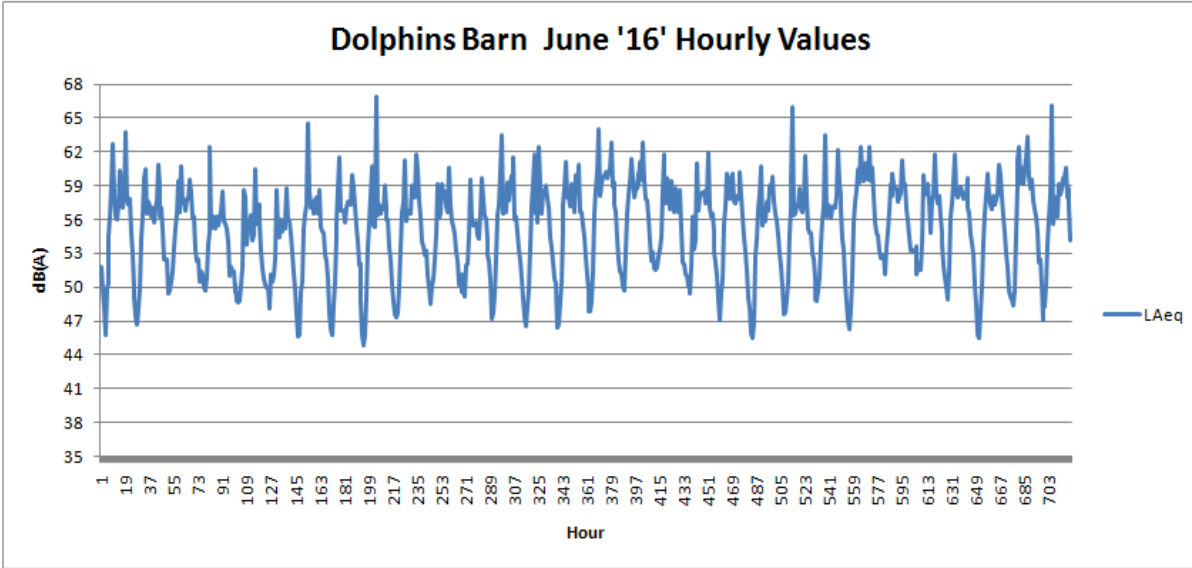
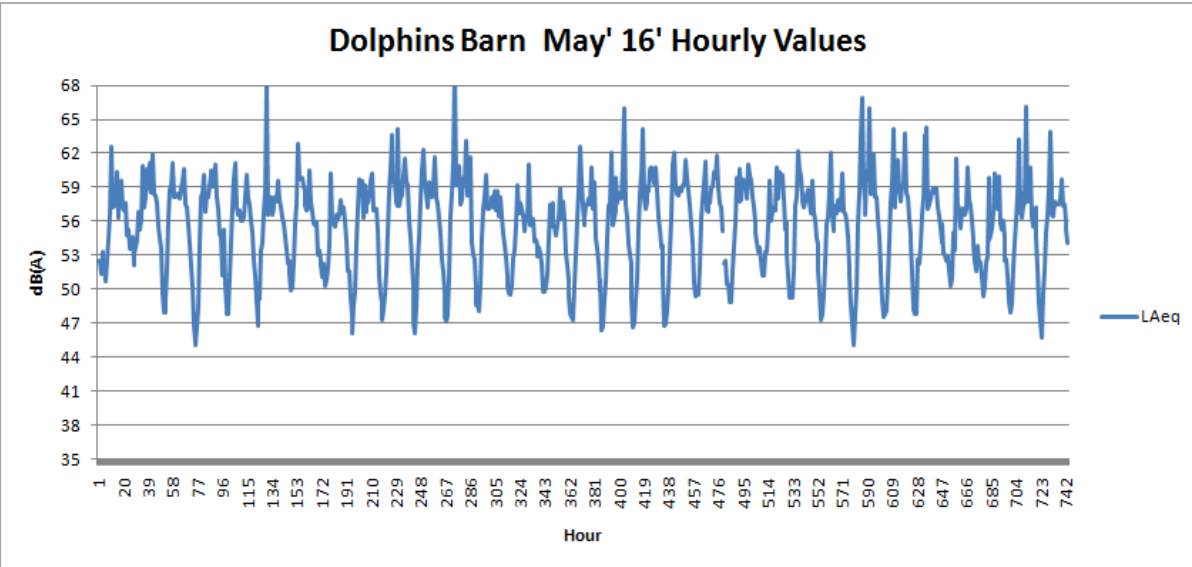
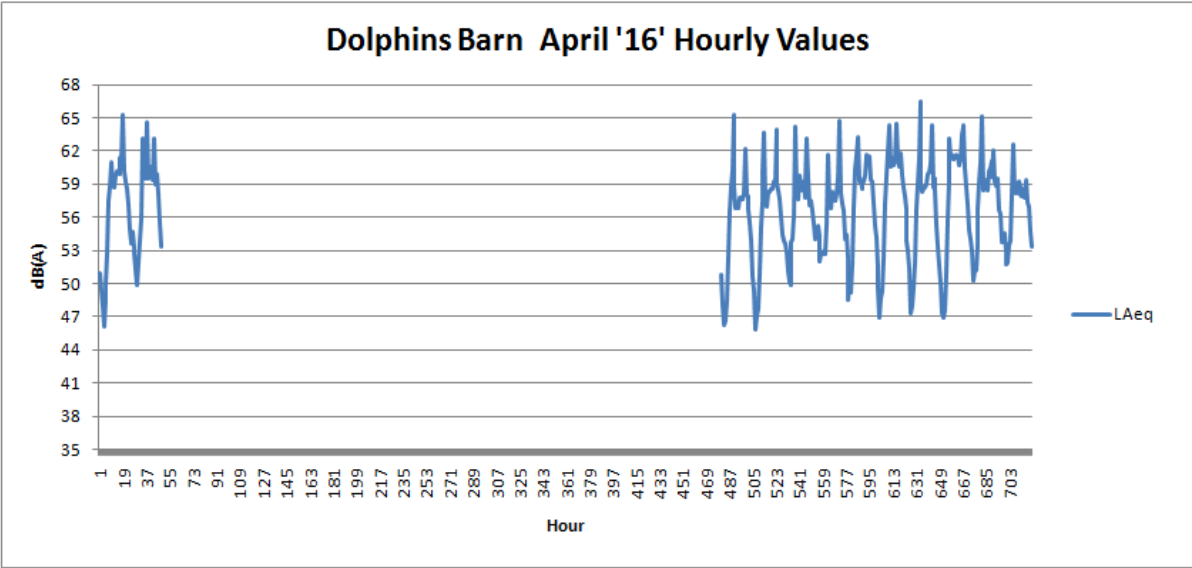
**Dolphin's Barn
Parnell Road.
DUBLIN 8**

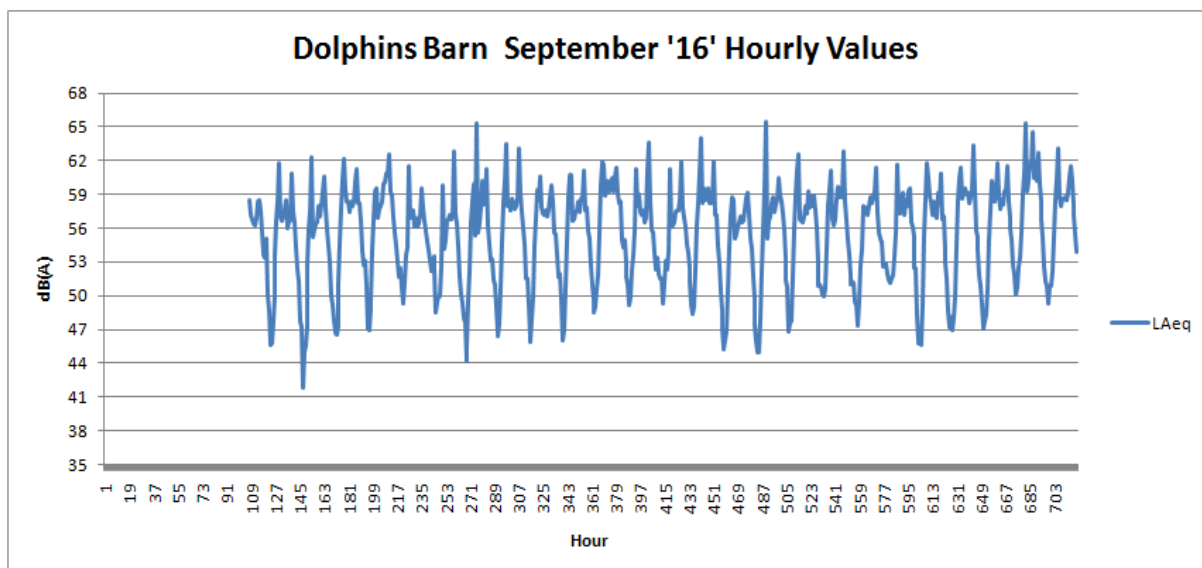
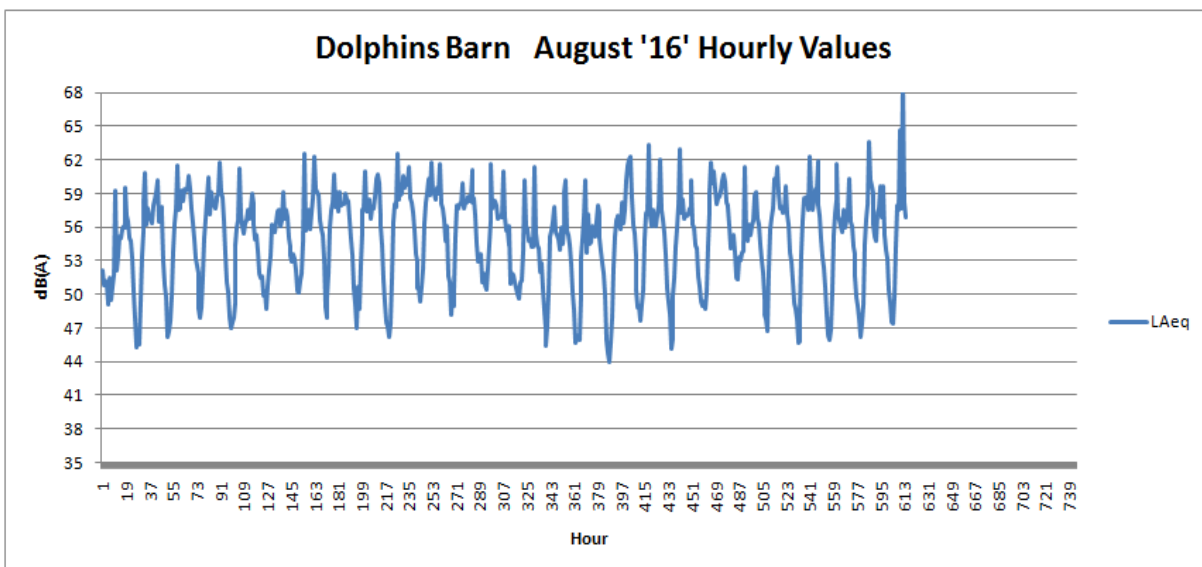
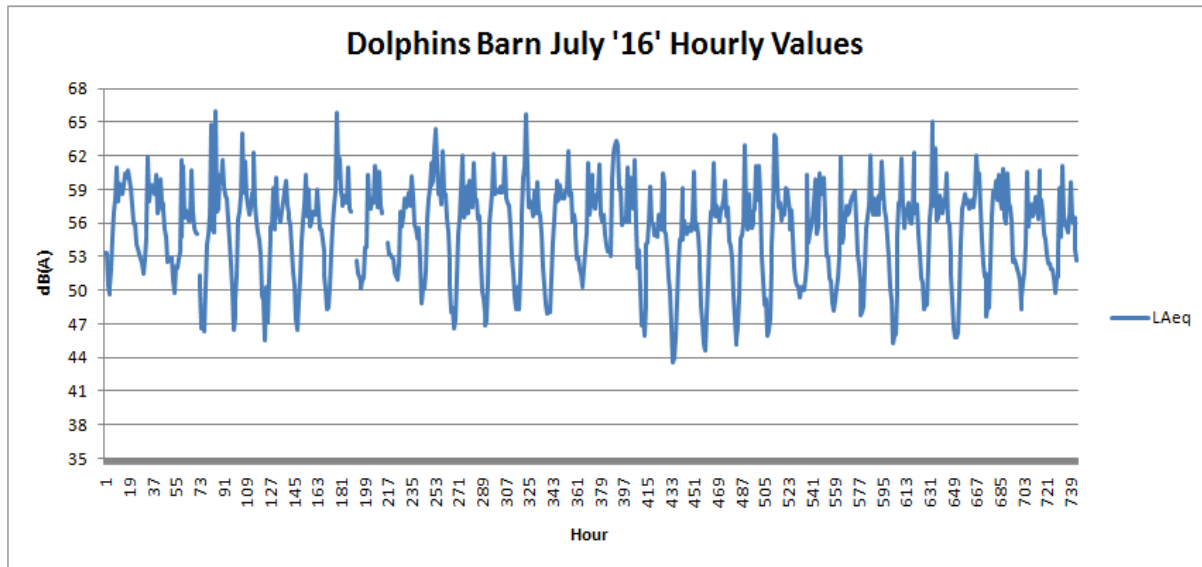


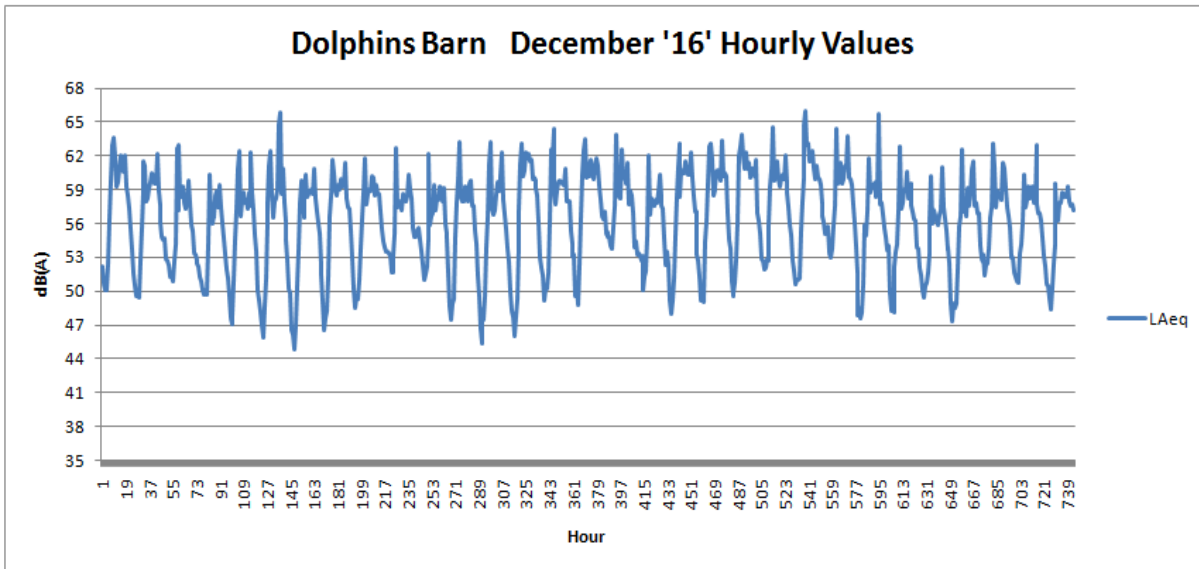
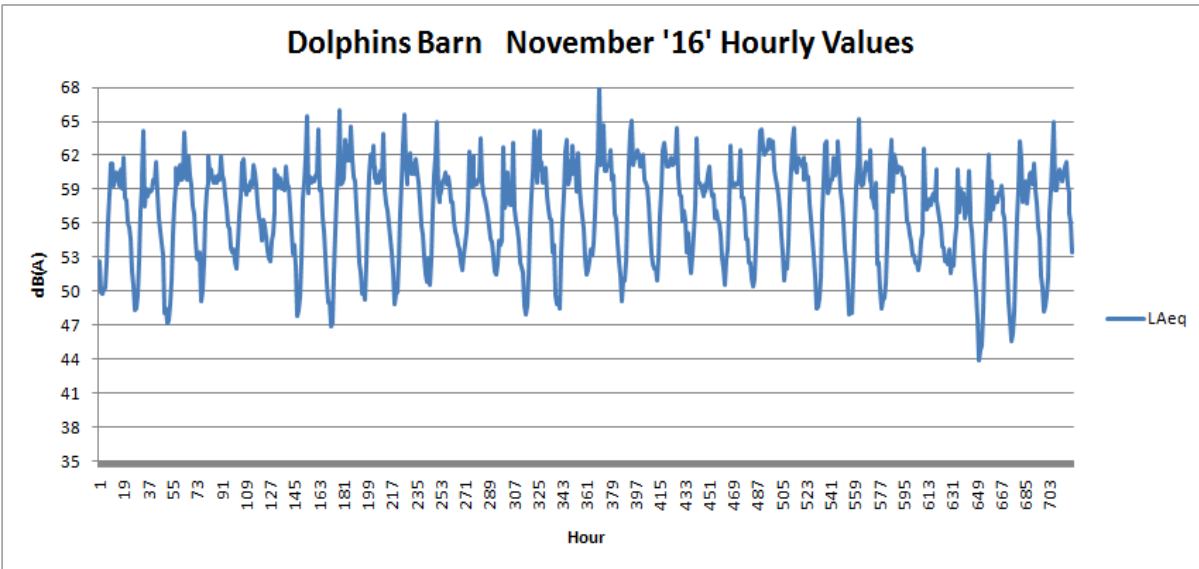
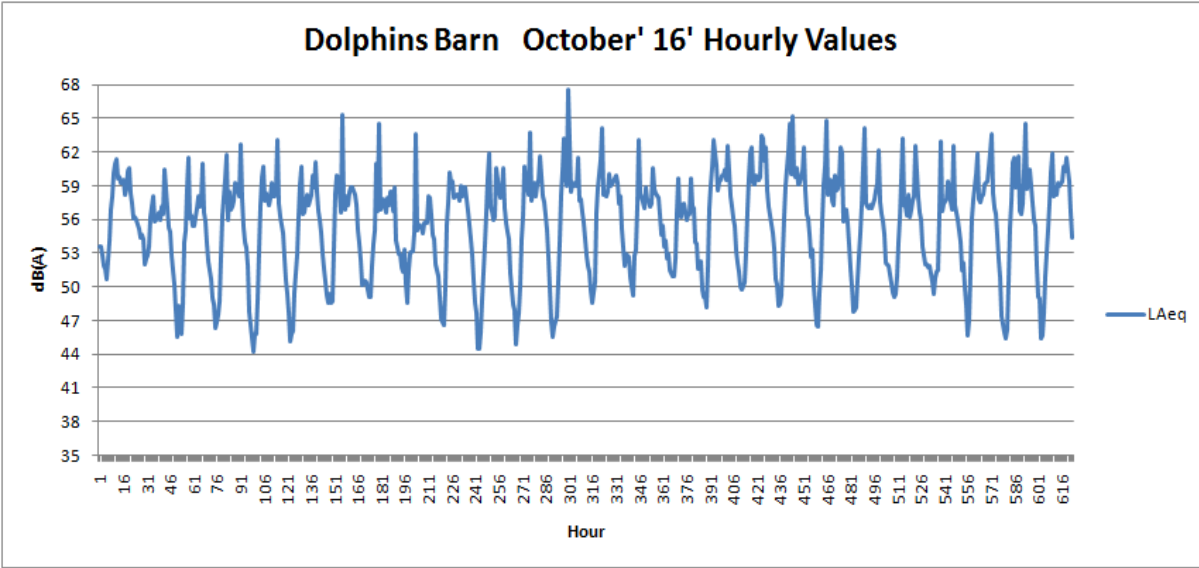
Dolphins Barn Hourly Values - 2016



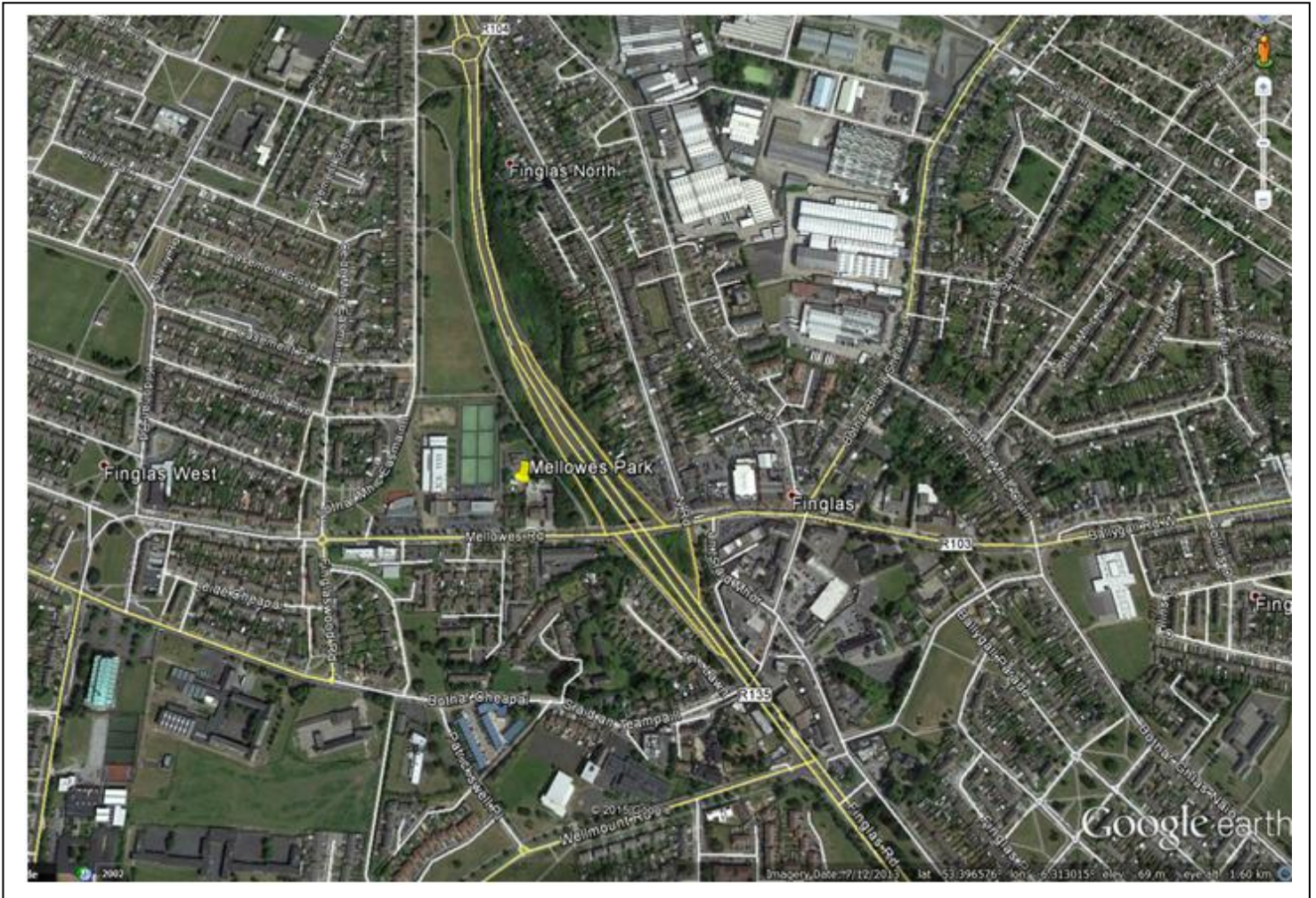


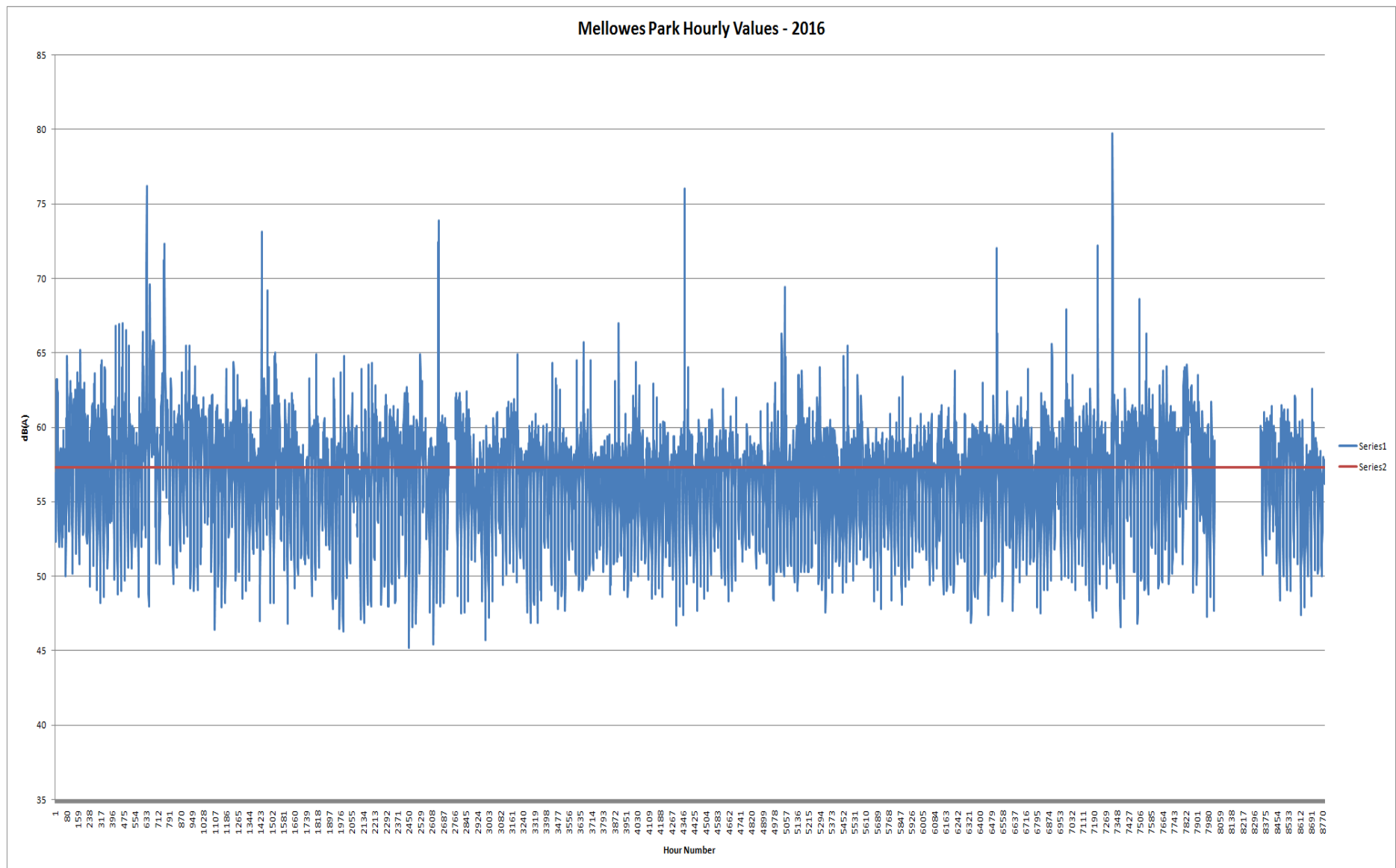


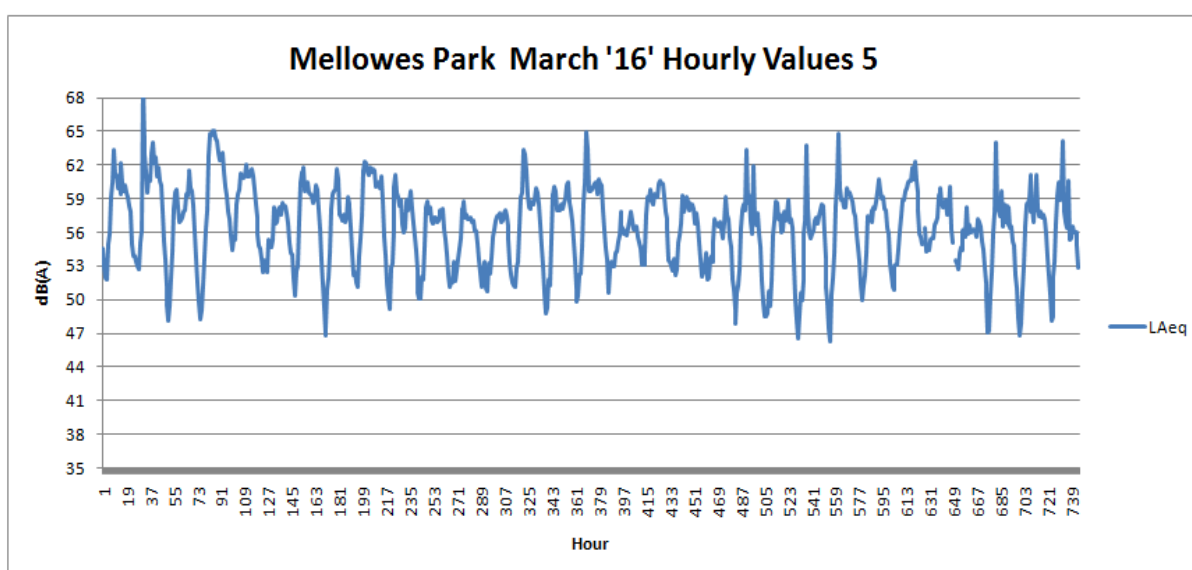
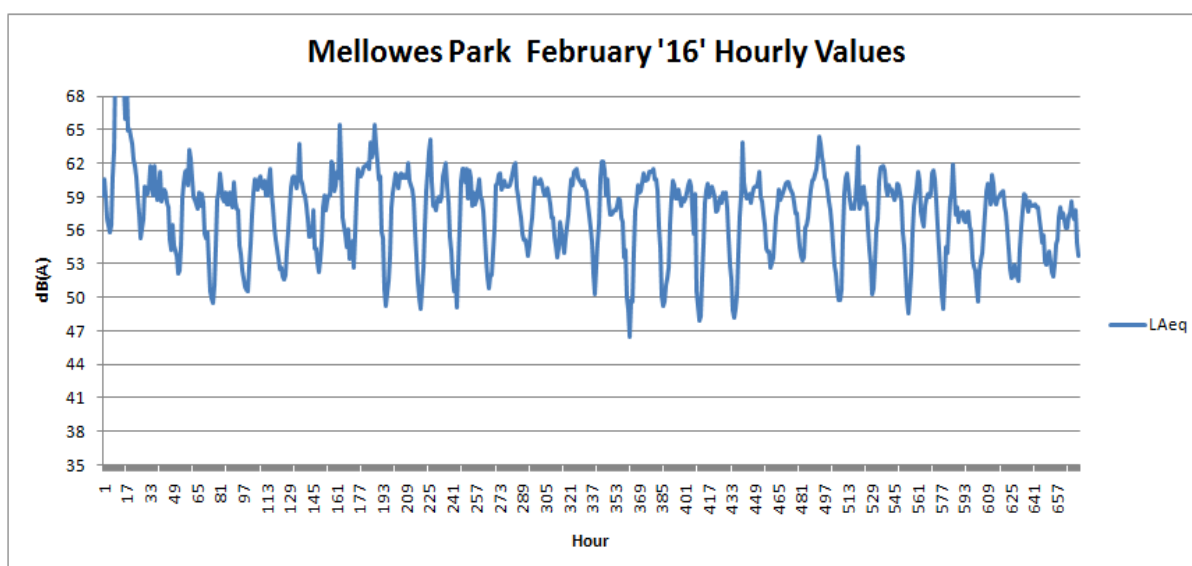
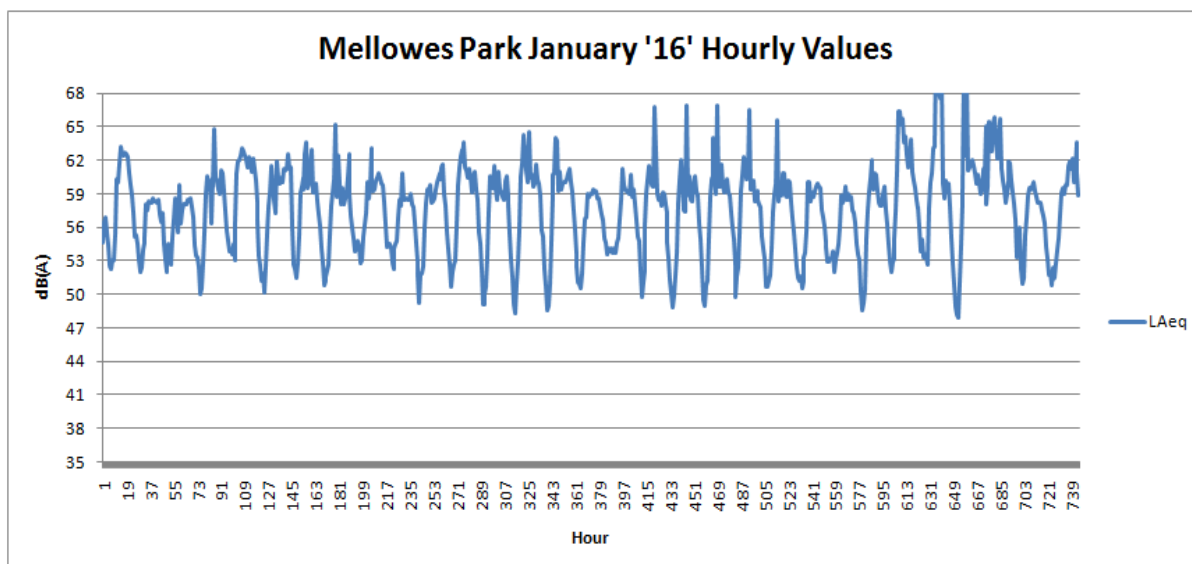


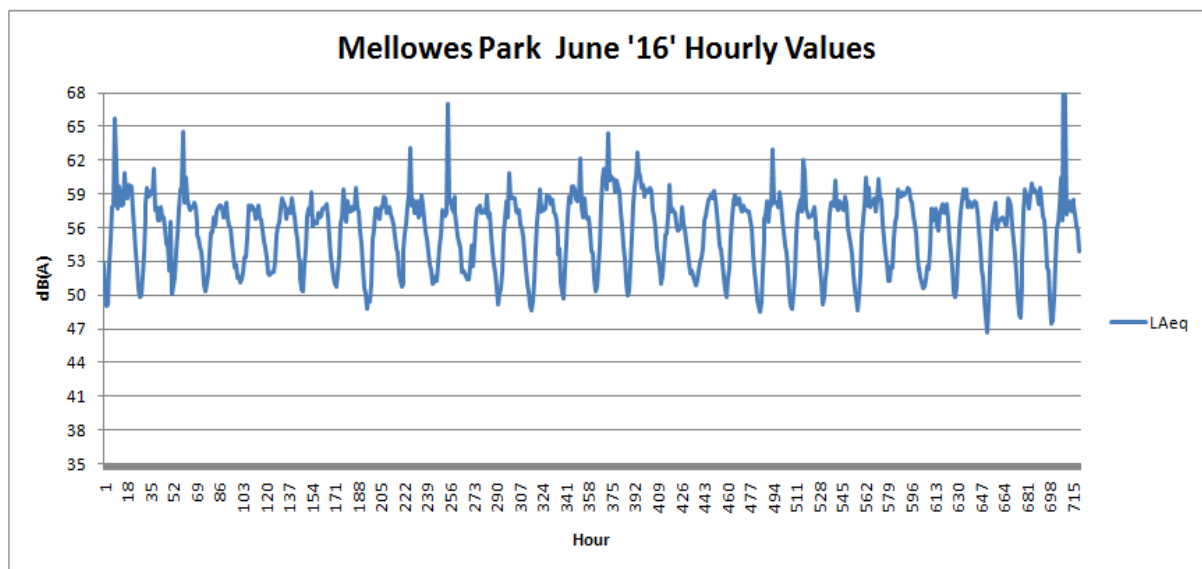
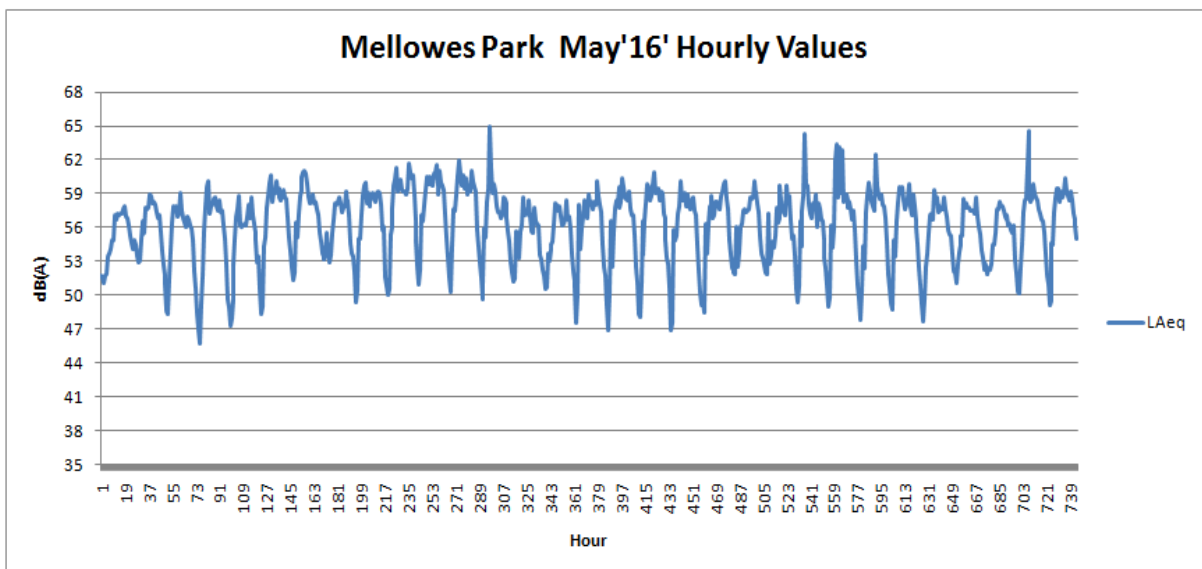
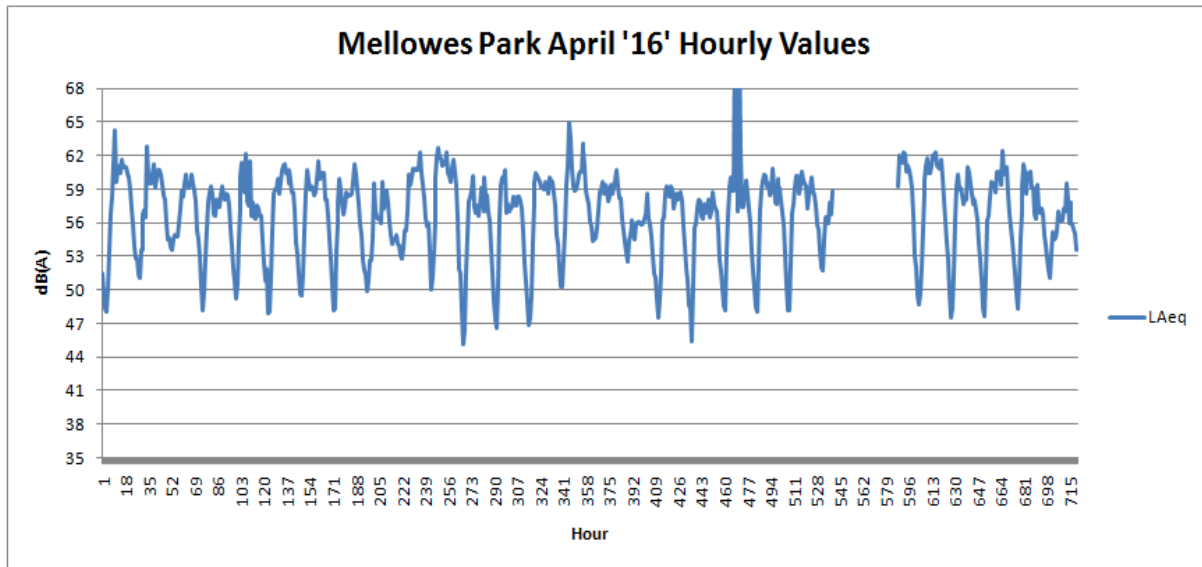


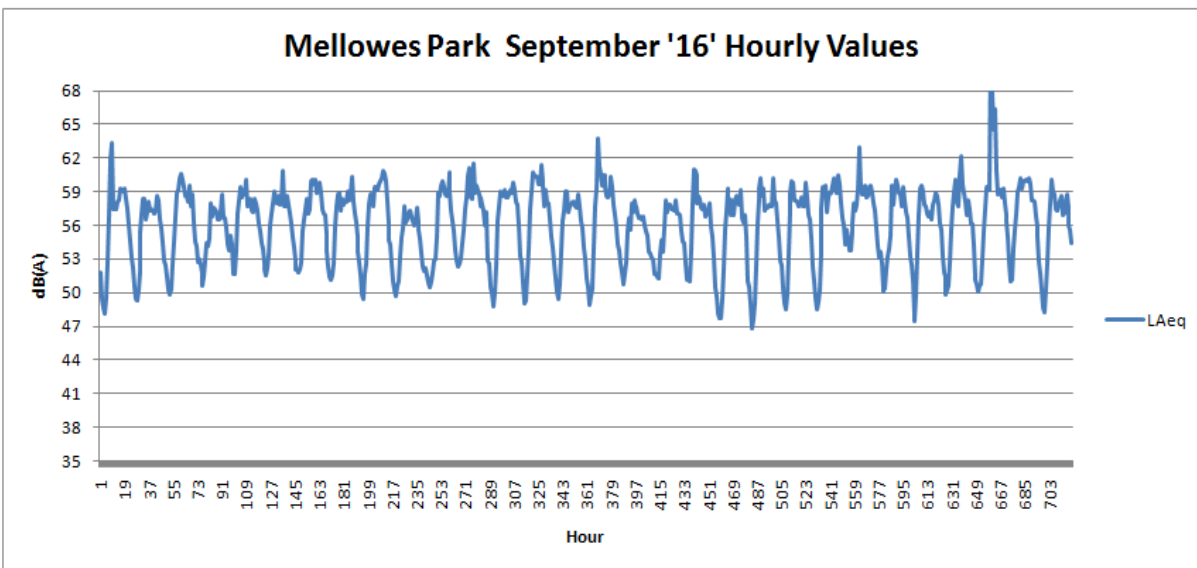
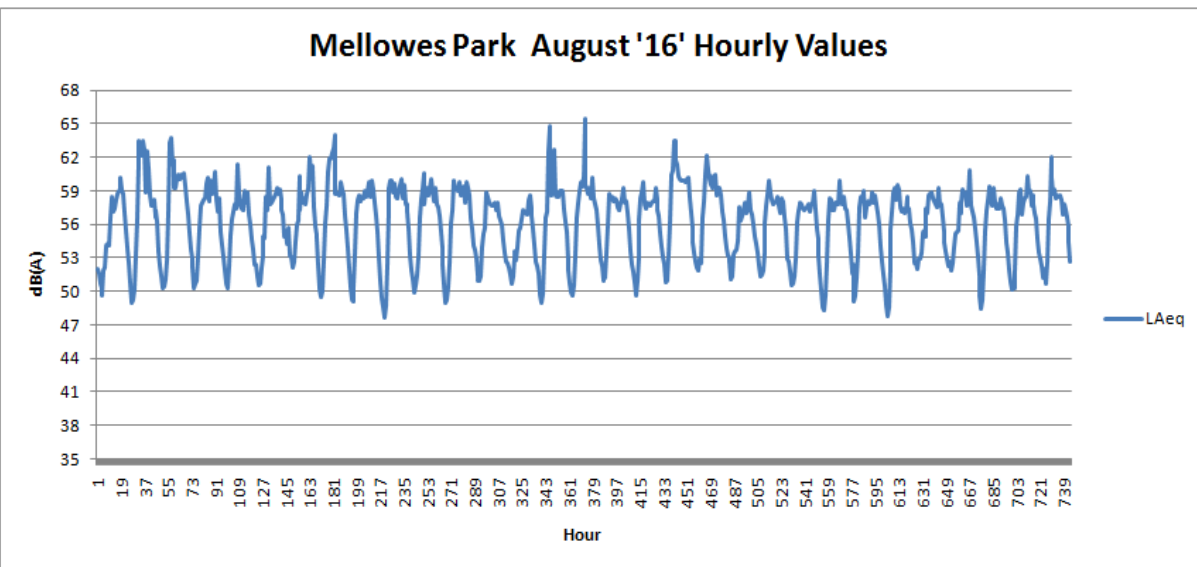
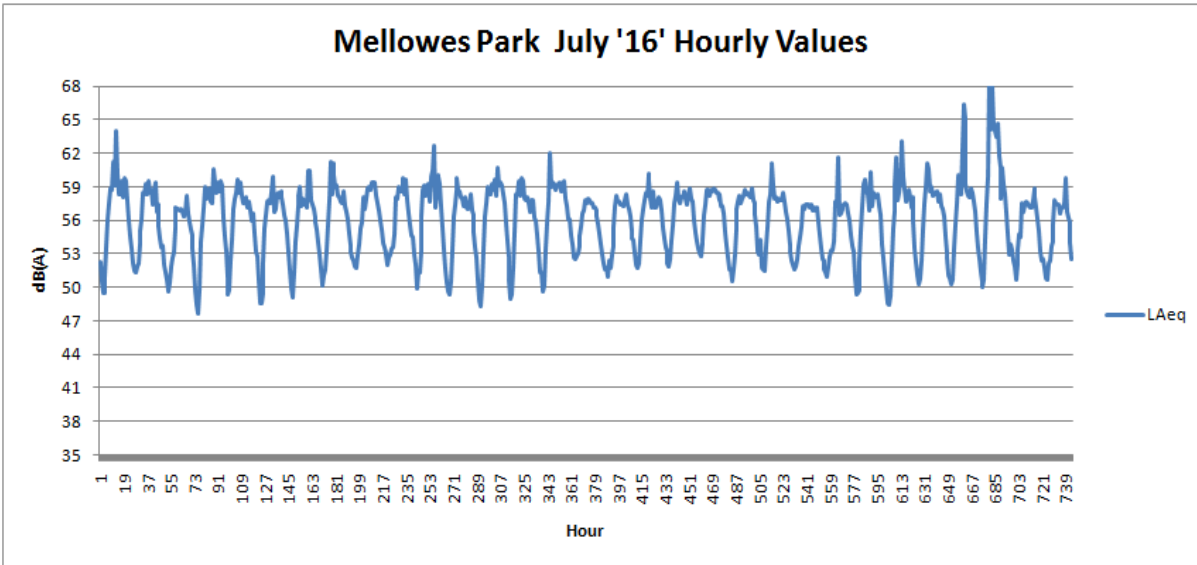
Mellowes Park
Finglas
DUBLIN 11

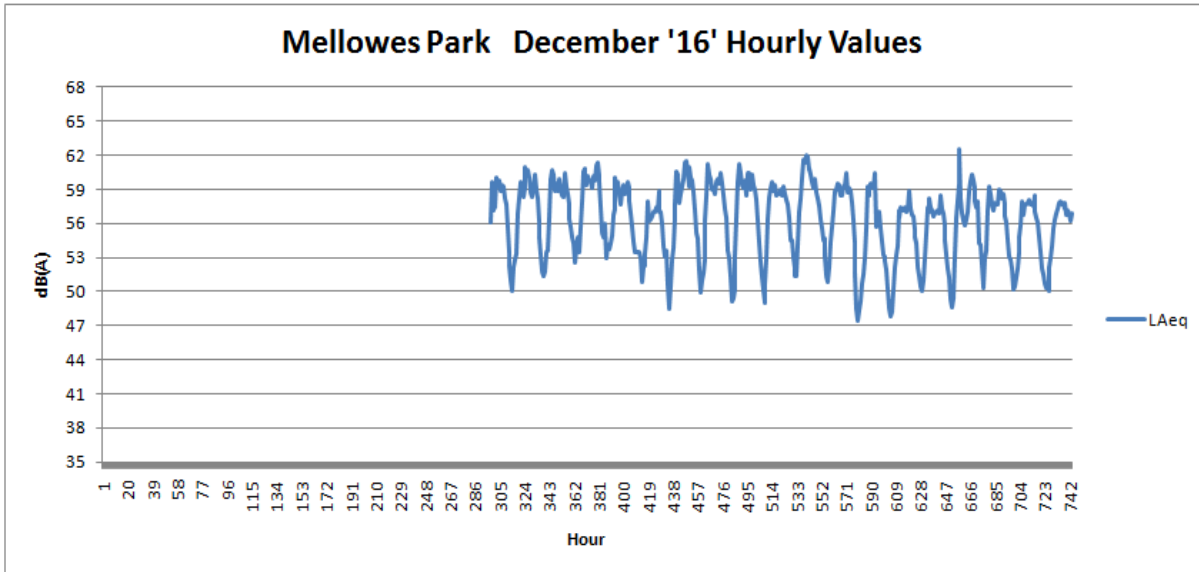
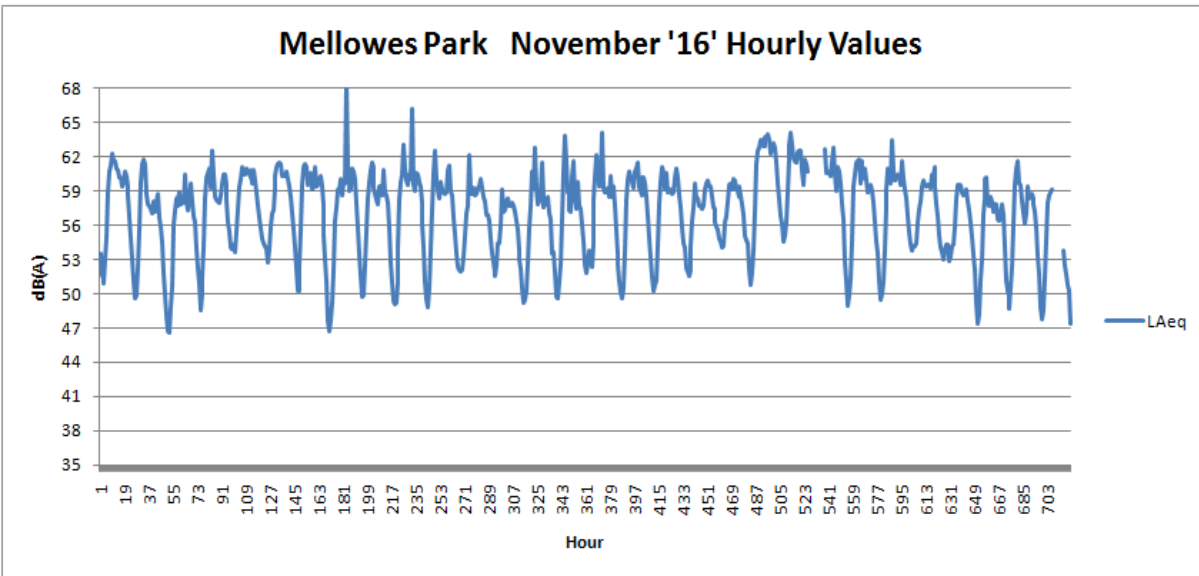
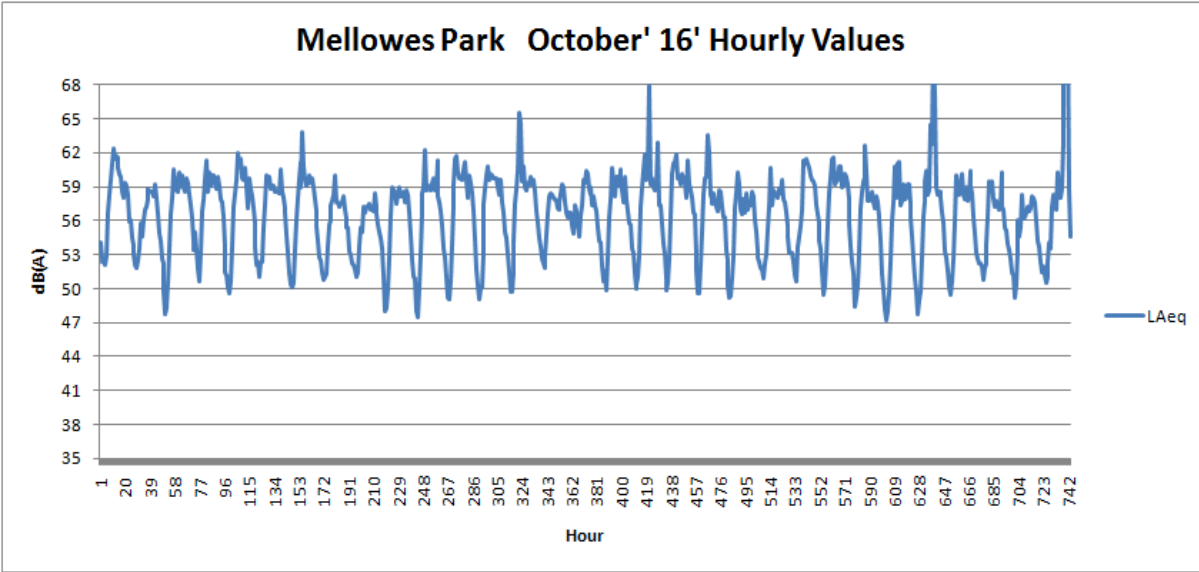












Notes



Comhairle Cathrach
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council

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